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AN INQUIRY INTO THE VALUES FOR DIALOGIC PREACHING IN THE
RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE WORK OF MAN

by
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III

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Only the emotionally secure person, rooted in a deep and abiding faith, dare attempt to be a preacher in this age. He is not just under the gun but caught in a cross-fire that makes the charge of the Light Brigade, immortalized in Tennyson's poem, seem like a child's war.

On the one side, the preacher is being pressed by the "post-Christian era" pallbearers who wonder if perhaps we are not also living in a "post-preaching era." On the other side is the pressure of the renewal emphasis of the small group movement which insists on dialogue not monologue, as well as the whole school of communication theorists. At the very same time, the sensitive preacher must be aware that in front of him on any Sunday morning are people who live with the pressures and confusion of a technological society, as well as a God who calls him to proclaim the Gospel. This study is a partial answer to the central question "Is Preaching Outmoded?" posed by Theodore O. Wedel, warden emeritus, College of Preachers, of the Washington Cathedral.¹

I. THE PROBLEM

Because of the emerging questions about the validity of

¹Theodore O. Wedel, "Is Preaching Outmoded?" Religion in Life, XXXIV:4 (Autumn 1965), 534.

preaching, the serious preacher must continually assess not just the techniques but also the content in his preaching. Furthermore, he must have an increasing sensitivity and awareness to the man in the pew and the world in which he lives.

Samuel Miller puts the issue by saying:

If he clings tenaciously to the traditional image, he is likely to find himself literally outside the life of his people; if he identifies himself with the life of the time, he is likely to find himself outside the realm of anything substantially religious.²

On the one hand, the problem is one of finding a focus that blends clarity and strength so that the hearer can focus his life before the specific fields of daily concern.

What we are seeking is fundamentally a reconciling image, although the descriptive adjective is far from strong enough to describe the dynamic energy inherent in true symbols. Usually we consider a symbol or an image as a static object, a picture of a particular sort. Actually, however, even advertising in its crassest efforts deliberately counts on the dynamic intensity of certain images. Few of them have reconciling power. What we need is an image of such interest and depth that it can redeem life from superficiality and relate us again to the depths of our origin and the ground of our existence.³

On the other hand, some conscious effort must be made by the preacher to know the field of concern of the man in the pew. Since the average suburban congregation lives really in several worlds, to which world of the suburban man will the preacher speak? There is

² Samuel H. Miller, The Dilemma of Modern Belief (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 96.

³ Ibid., pp. 30-31.

the world of residence with its personal relationships; the world of work with its own ethos and structure; the public sector; and, the leisure world of spare time.⁴

Moreover, in the light of current renewal movements in the church both in the area of small groups and in the area of communication, are there insights of practical worth for the development of a broader base for sermonic preparation? Anything less than openness on the part of the preacher condemns his preaching to becoming outmoded.

II. THE SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study seeks to demonstrate the bifocality of preaching through the selection of a doctrinal focus in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, on the one hand; and, on the other hand to select the world of work as the field of concern.

One cannot read C. H. Dodd's The Apostolic Preaching And Its Developments without being made aware of the centrality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ to the kerygma of the early church. Yet for both the preacher and the man in the pew, the resurrection is a once a year matter. Why? Does the resurrection of Jesus Christ bring any new dimension of meaning to the meaninglessness of our technological society?

⁴"Christian Renewal," Time Magazine, LXXXIV:26 (December 25, 1964), 48.

In the introduction of their book, Acquittal by Resurrection, Markus Barth and Verne H. Fletcher pose the problem to be faced as they deal with the resurrection of Jesus Christ in respect to righteousness in the believer and justice in the political order.

The theme of this book is the resurrection of Jesus Christ understood as the foundation of righteousness and justice. This theme has scarcely been recognized by the church or even by theologians. The modern Protestant, intimidated by rationalistic incredulity, has tended to treat the resurrection as a hard and troublesome doctrine which, fortunately, as he assumes, requires consideration on only one Sunday of the year and, perhaps in funeral homilies. Moreover, even if one adopts a broader historical perspective, it is noteworthy that, unlike the Eastern theological tradition, Western theological thought, while affirming that 'on the third day he rose again from the dead,' has nonetheless given relatively more weight to the crucifixion as the primary dimension of the Christ event.⁵

In order to consider the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the study will consider the theological presentations of three leading twentieth century men who are at the same time both theologians with ethical concerns and substantial preachers: Bultmann, Tillich, and Brunner.

To clarify some of the dimensions of the field of work with its technological implications, the study will consider the National Council of Churches of Christ in America's "on-the-job ethics" experiments as well as the nature of the technological age, the organization man, incentives for working, and the leisure revolution.

The task faced by the preacher at this point is sharply

⁵Markus Barth and Verne H. Fletcher, Acquittal by Resurrection (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. v.

stated in John Wilkinson's introduction to Jacques Ellul's The Technological Society when he writes:

Ellul, in agreement with much of Greek philosophy, seems to think that the distinction usually drawn between thought and action is a pernicious one. To him, to bear witness to the fact of the technological society is the most revolutionary of all possible acts. His personal reason for doing so is that he is a Christian, a fact which is spelled out in his book La Présence. His concept of the duty of a Christian, who stands uniquely (is 'present') at the point of intersection of this material world and the eternal world to come, is not to concoct ambiguous ethical schemes or programs of social action, but to testify to the truth of both worlds and thereby to affirm his freedom through the revolutionary nature of his religion.

It is clear that many people who will accept Ellul's diagnosis of the technical disease will not accept his Christian therapy. The issue is nevertheless joined: if massive technological intervention is the only imaginable means to turn aside technology from its headlong career, how may we be sure that this intervention will be something other than just some new technical scheme, which, more likely than not, will be catastrophe?⁶

In the light of the challenge to confrontation of Ellul, the thesis will then consider several of the confrontive, missionary efforts of the Church such as the Iona Community, the German Evangelical Academies, the Protestant Lay Centers in America, and the On-the-Job Ethics Seminars, mentioned earlier. These efforts, in turn, lead to the present attempt to apply the confrontive method through dialogical preaching. Finally a preaching project seeking to bring into dialogue the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus with emerging implications for a preaching method and content that will benefit both the man in the pulpit and the man in the pew.

⁶ Jacques Ellul, The Technological Society (New York: Knopf, 1965), p. xx.

III. OTHER STUDIES RELATED TO THIS AREA

The efforts of a variety of men contribute to our understanding of the problem of preaching today.

First, teachers of preaching contribute to the field: Andrew W. Blackwood's Doctrinal Preaching for Today is a standard work on the focus of doctrinal preaching in general as is Merrill R. Abbey's Living Doctrine in a Vital Pulpit. Both Abbey and James T. Cleland in his Preaching to be Understood recognize the bifocality of preaching.

Second, there is the contribution of Reuel L. Howe in The Miracle of Dialogue with his concern for the failure of monologic communication and his attempts to understand how we can build dialogical communication into preaching. Seward Hiltner's Preface to Pastoral Theology is useful for its contribution to communication in preaching through the use of focus - field theory. Papers presented by Hiltner to the Association of Seminary Professors in the Practical Fields further develop this concept. The matter is further explored by Allen J. Moore in a paper "The Role of Religious Education in Theological Education" presented to the same association of seminary professors in 1964.

Third, there is a contribution made by those concerned with the small group engaged in preparatory work on the scripture to be used in the sermon. Clyde Reid's unpublished Th.D. thesis, "Two-way Communication through Small Groups in Relation to Preaching" presents

the results of a research project using members of Bible study, prayer and sermon discussion groups to reveal the direct relationship to one's responsiveness to preaching. Issued in the same year, Dietrich Ritschl's book A Theology of Proclamation elaborates the thesis that the event of preaching is one in which the whole congregation participates and bears responsibility. He develops the idea further in a series of articles under the general title "The Event of Preaching" prepared for The Christian Round Table magazine. Following in this same style, Browne Barr in his Yale Lectures on Preaching, Parish Back Talk, illustrates this approach of Ritschl's in the context of a large urban, university congregation in Berkeley, California. Other specific resources for both the focus consideration in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the field of work will be found in the bibliography.

IV. THE METHOD OF THIS STUDY

Having selected a specific doctrinal focus and a specified field of concern in the area of work, a study was first made to consider on the one hand the seminal contributions of three leading theologians to our understanding of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and, on the other hand, to consider what are some of the central issues arising from work in an automated, technological society. A preaching project continuing for seven weeks attempts to deal with these issues from the theological focus of the resurrection

of Jesus Christ. Each week on Monday, the preacher met with a small group of laymen to reflect both on the preaching which had been done and to consider the scripture and the central idea projected for the coming week as to their relevance to their lives at work in particular. These meetings as well as the sermons were tape recorded. Three of the sermons appear in the appendices. A summary of the small group, "pulpit talk back" meetings with conclusions as to the merit of this form of preaching follows in Chapter VII.

V. ORGANIZATION OF REMAINDER OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapters II, III, and IV comprising Part Two attempt to deal with the theological contributions of Bultmann, Tillich and Brunner, particularly as they relate to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Some consideration of their ethical awareness as it applies to the field of work and their sermonic handling of the resurrection of Jesus Christ follow.

Part Three seeks to develop some of the dimensions inherent in understanding the central issues present in the field of work. Part Four will consider the development of dialogic sermon preparation and the preaching project with conclusions arising from the project for preaching that will not be outmoded. Finally, the need for further research and unanswered questions are indicated.

PART TWO: THE FOCUS IN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

CHAPTER II

RUDOLF BULTMANN: THE RESURRECTION AS MYTH

The Problem of Reinterpretation of the New Testament Message.

For Bultmann, the New Testament is couched in the mythological language of a pre-scientific cosmos. Because man's knowledge and mastery of the world have advanced so far due to the influence of science and technology, the preacher is forced to face with discernment how to make the kerygma communicable for this day.

The problem and the method of dealing with the problem are expressed by Bultmann in his affirmation that "the mythological view of the world is obsolete". So he writes

All this is the language of mythology, and the origin of the various themes can be easily traced in the contemporary mythology of Jewish Apocalyptic and in the redemption myths of Gnosticism. To this extent the kerygma is incredible to modern man, for he is convinced that the mythical view of the world is obsolete. We are therefore bound to ask whether, when we preach the Gospel today, we expect our converts to accept not only the Gospel message, but also the mythical view of the world in which it is set. If not, does the New Testament embody a truth which is quite independent of its mythical setting? If it does, theology must undertake the task of stripping the Kerygma from its mythical framework, of 'demythologizing' it.¹

The problem has implications for the handling of the resurrection of Jesus. Bultmann describes the matter in the following way:

The resurrection of Jesus is just as difficult for modern man, if it means an event whereby a living supernatural power is released which can henceforth be appropriated through the

¹Hans Werner Bartsch (ed.), Kerygma and Myth (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), p. 3.

sacraments. To the biologist such language is meaningless, for he does not regard death as a problem at all. The idealist would not object to the idea of a life immune from death, but he could not believe that such a life is made available by the resuscitation of a dead person. If that is the way God makes life available for man, his action is inextricably involved in a nature miracle. Such a notion he finds incomprehensible, for he can see God at work only in the reality of his personal life and in his transformation. But, quite apart from the incredibility of such a miracle, he cannot see how an event like this could be the act of God, or how it could affect his own life.²

Bultmann's task is not "to make the New Testament relevant to modern man at all costs"³ but to discern what is the nature of the New Testament message and to understand it as it was meant to be.

Following his argument, it would be wise to define the nature of myth as he uses the word. The task of myth is to express man's understanding of his world and so myth is not therefore an objective world picture. The difference lies somewhere between the German Weltbild (world picture) and Weltanschauung (world perspective).⁴

Thus in a footnote Bultmann defines myth as

. . . the use of imagery to express the other worldly in terms of this world and the divine in terms of human life, the other side in terms of this side. For instance, divine transcendence is expressed as spatial distance. It is a mode of expression which makes it easy to understand the cultus as an action in which material means are used to convey immaterial power. Myth is not used in that modern sense, according to what it is practically equivalent to ideology.⁵

To reinterpret myth in terms which bring meaning to human

²Ibid., p. 18.

³Ibid., p. 10.

⁴Bernard H. Anderson, The Unfolding Drama of the Bible (New York: Association Press, 1957), p. 26.

⁵Bartsch, op. cit., p. 10.

existence, Bultmann turns to existentialism which distinguishes between the essence of something and its existence. For the existentialist, all one can ever have direct contact with is existence. Such an experience involves the individual's own experience of himself and his search for a purpose and a destiny in life. Knowledge is not enough. The existentialist insists on concern, involvement and engagement. The existentialist moves from being an objective spectator with an intellectual attitude to one who is involved with existence in an act of trust and commitment. More specifically for Bultmann, God has acted in a decisive way in Jesus Christ, giving man the clue to the meaning of human existence. So the Christian gospel offers man deliverance from this world's tyranny and its inauthentic existence for a world beyond of authentic existence to be experienced here and now. Thus, authentic existence is when man chooses through personal trust and commitment the salvation event in the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ as the determining power in making up his life.

In order to understand how Bultmann expresses these concepts, his single volume of sermons translated into English will be used as a basic source. The Marburg Sermon volume This World and the Beyond was published in 1960 in America. The sermons were preached between June 7, 1936 and July 25, 1950. It is unfortunate that no introduction explains why these sermons were selected and not others for undoubtedly Bultmann preached more than twenty-one times during the period.

Of the twenty-one sermons, fourteen are from the Gospels (five from Matthew, four each from Luke and John and one from Mark). Three sermons are from the epistles, one each from Acts and Revelation; and, the remaining two are from the old Testament books of Genesis and Lamentations. All the sermons are identified by the Scripture passage heading and date rather than the conventional title. Reference to the sermons in this chapter will employ Bultmann's scriptural headings, with the single exception of one sermon identified only by date.

With these words of introduction, the chapter will now deal with (1) the Cross and the Resurrection in the Marburg Sermons; (2) radical obedience as man's response to the proclamation of the kerygma in the Cross and Resurrection event in the Marburg Sermons; (3) Bultmann's contributions to the preaching of the resurrection and the response of radical obedience as used in the project sermon series, "God's Victory and Ours".

I. THE CROSS AND THE RESURRECTION IN THE MARBURG SERMONS

The average preacher today, if he did not know something of the orientation of Bultmann, would be amazed at the number of the sermons in which the cross and the resurrection are central. He might even conclude that the volume is mainly Easter sermons until he notes the dates on each sermon. Almost one half of the sermons emphasize the inseparable Cross and Resurrection theme.

Eschatology. For Bultmann, the cross is not an isolated historical event from out of the past but is rather an eschatological event in and beyond time, "in so far as it (understood in its significance, that is, for faith) is an ever-present reality".⁶ In the cross as a permanent fact, Christ brings to an end one world and opens a new age. So in the Sermon dated July 27, 1938, Bultmann deplores the value of time measurements except in terms of scripture where time is always "fulfilled time". In St. Matthew 11:28-30 and in St. Mark 13:31-33, he refers to a new future which is ours and yet it is God's future. In the sermon on St. John 16:22-23, he speaks of the fact that the power of this world is broken and a new age is initiated. God's new order has begun.

Cross and Resurrection. The distinction between the significance of the cross for the first preachers and its significance for the preacher today is clarified as for the former, the cross was that of Jesus with whom they lived. For them, there was the close personal connection with this personal experience. For the latter, "the cross cannot disclose its own meaning: it is an event of the past. We can never recover it as an event in our lives. All we know of it is derived from historical report."⁷ But then, Jesus is not simply proclaimed as crucified. He is also raised from the dead.. Thus for Bultmann, the cross and the resurrection form an

⁶Ibid., p. 36.

⁷Ibid., p. 38.

inseparable unity. It is at this point that the resurrection is of great relevance.

So in the sermon on St. John 16:22-23, Bultmann talks of "His cross and His victory". Affirming the vital relationship of cross and resurrection, Bultmann says

Let us remind ourselves once more of this: 'that day' which spells freedom is also according to the word of Jesus Easter Day, the Day of Resurrection, the day which follows on the crucifixion. 'You may have sorrow now' - it is the sorrow of the passion, of the cross, by which all desires and hopes are destroyed. 'But I will see you again and your hearts will be bestowed on the grief of the cross. And only he who is ready to enter with Jesus into the dread hour of God-forsakenness on the cross, will also be allowed to share in the joy of the Risen Saviour.⁸

In his sermon on II Corinthians 4:6-11, Bultmann indicates that the cross of Christ is not some long-distant historical event but one which penetrates all human history. In the cross, God pronounces his judgment on the world. The resurrection of Christ is actualized whenever a man takes up his cross, letting go of this worldly realities for the transcendent world beyond.

Easter Day. Now the resurrection is "not an event of past history with a self-evident meaning".⁹ The cross and the resurrection form a single, cosmic event, bringing judgment to the world as well as opening up the possibilities for the authentic life. As

⁸Rudolf Bultmann, This World and the Beyond (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), p. 195.

⁹Bartsch, op. cit., p. 38.

such the resurrection is not to be appealed to as the proof of the cosmic and eschatological significance of the cross. Indeed, it is an article of faith and not an event of past history. Historically we cannot prove the resurrection but only that the first disciples came to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. "For the historical event of the rise of the Easter faith means for us what it meant for the first disciples - namely, the self-attestation of the risen Lord, the act of God in which the redemptive event of the cross is completed."¹⁰ So Christ meets us in the preaching of the crucified and risen Christ. The faith of Easter is faith in the word of preaching. So in the sermon on St. John 16:22-23, Bultmann says "And the meaning of Jesus' words is that the 'day' which spells an end to this world has through Easter Day mysteriously become a present reality for believers."¹¹

It is at this particular point of the use of the resurrection as proof that Julius Schniewind raises questions as to what is central about Jesus for Bultmann. He agrees with Bultmann that the resurrection cannot be a miraculous proof inasmuch as the resurrection is itself an object of faith, made present in the proclamation of the gospel. He questions whether Bultmann is accurate when he posits as the event of Easter Day not the resurrection but rather the disciples' faith in the resurrection. "The question is whether

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 42.

¹¹ Bultmann, This World and the Beyond, p. 190.

this theory does justice to the uniqueness and finality of the Easter event (I Cor. 15), and to the relation between the faith of Easter and the uniqueness and finality of Jesus himself."¹² Schniewind argues that Bultmann disregards or ignores the relationship which exists between the earthly Jesus and the Easter event. He questions whether this disregard of the uniqueness and finality of Jesus and his interpretation of the Christ event in terms of "historic-personal existence" betray him into reducing the Christological events to the levels of symbols or stimuli.

Bultmann's immediate answer in the debate suggests that the cross and the resurrection are two separate events only from the standpoint of man in time but that in their eschatological significance, they are a single, individual event.¹³ He clarifies his position further in Jesus Christ and Mythology insisting on the historical reality of Jesus of Nazareth and the eschatological event of God's work in Christ.¹⁴ In a much more recent article in a series of essays The Historical Jesus and the Kerygmatic Christ, Bultmann takes the accusations one by one and indicates where he stands. In the light of the "new quest" for the historical Jesus, he indicates how the sides have shifted and how much that is under

¹²Bartsch, op. cit., p. 69.

¹³Ibid., p. 112

¹⁴Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus Christ and Mythology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 80.

discussion is a matter of emphasis, according to the purpose of the theologian.¹⁵

The Power of the Resurrection. In Jesus' resurrection, his Lordship is established. So in the sermon Acts 17:22-32, Bultmann refers to "Jesus Christ the Crucified and Risen Lord". Again in St. Matthew 11:28-30, he refers to the Lord's Day which is the Day of the Resurrection of Christ, a new day of victory. In the sermon on Philippians 3:7-14, Bultmann affirms that "when Christ has truly laid His grip upon us, we experience not only the power of His resurrection, but also the fellowship of His sufferings."¹⁶ In the sermon on II Cor. 4:6-11, Bultmann affirms that the power of the resurrection is actualized when a man takes up the cross of Christ. What is he saying? He is saying, in brief, that the resurrection is crucial to the power of authentic life experienced as a man responds to the proclamation of the cross and the resurrection kerygma: He is saying that the resurrection event, which is beyond the framework of history, is eternity expressed in terms of time, the beyond released in terms of God's power in this world. In this sense, Bultmann's position serves to release us from searching for proofs of the resurrection to experiencing the power of the resurrection

¹⁵Carl E. Braaten and Roy A. Harrisville, The Historical Jesus and the Kerygmatic Christ, Essays on the New Quest of the Historical Jesus (New York: Abingdon Press, 1964), p. 15 ff.

¹⁶Bultmann, This World and the Beyond, p. 56.

for authentic existence here and now. Since the power of the resurrection is released as a man responds to the proclamation of the resurrection, we turn now to a consideration of the response in radical obedience, from theology to ethics, from eschatology to existentialism, from the indicative to the imperative.

II. RADICAL OBEDIENCE - MAN'S RESPONSE TO THE PROCLAMATION OF THE RESURRECTION

The Proclamation. Proclamation for Bultmann is the presentation of God's mighty act in the cross and the resurrection of Christ in such a way that provision is made for man's response to the salvation occurrence. To demythologize the scriptures means that the proclamation does not offer a doctrine or teaching as intellectual facts appealing to the reason. Christian proclamation is addressed to the hearer, to the self. It is a personal message to man from God to which he must answer "yes" or "no". Any difficulty with the proclamation is for Bultmann not in the area of theoretical thought but in the sphere of personal existence. Faith is interested in how God acts with man not in what God is Himself.¹⁷

In one sermon on St. John 16:5-15, Bultmann raises the issue of the role of the Church in the proclamation of the gospel of Christ. He insists that the very existence of the Church with its proclamation becomes the symbol of eternity in the midst of a self-sufficient

¹⁷¹⁷ Bultmann, Jesus Christ and Mythology, p. 43

¹⁸¹⁸ Bultmann, This World and the Beyond, p. 69.

world. He further develops the idea of the place of the Church in his essay in The Historical Jesus and the Kerygmatic Christ. Faith in Christ means also faith in the Church as the bearer of the kerygma.

If it is correct that in its kerygma the church represents the historical Jesus, if faith in Christ is at the same time faith in the church or faith in the Holy Ghost whom she received as a post-Easter gift (Acts 2, and especially John 20:22; cf. 14:16-17, 26: 16:7), then we can say that faith in the church as the bearer of the kerygma is the Easter faith which consists in the belief that Jesus Christ is present in the kerygma.¹⁹

In treating the proclamation of the resurrection, Bultmann summarizes his approach in Theology of the New Testament.²⁰ Since the resurrection cannot be demonstrated as an objective, historical fact, Bultmann insists on the proclamation of the resurrection as the basis for belief. What takes place is not the experience of accepting a historical fact so much as the experience of a personal address or challenge to the listener which challenges him personally. If he hears it as addressed to him personally speaking of his death and thus new life, he believes in the risen Christ. So in the sermon on St. John 16:5-15, he says "Rather the power of the world is broken as a result of the fact that the word of Jesus is proclaimed in it and again and again endows men with the power to resist the world."²¹ Again in the sermon St. Matthew 11:2-6, he asks "And where does Christ

¹⁹ Braaten, op. cit., p. 42.

²⁰ Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), I:305-306.

²¹ Bultmann, This World and the Beyond, p. 69.

hold sway? Wherever the Word of the Gospel is preached and heard in faith.²² To read any of the sermons, reveals to the reader that Bultmann is as faithful in practice as he is in precept when it comes to his understanding of proclamation. (Cf. "Preaching: Genuine and Secularized" by Bultmann²³) It is in this manner that Bultmann transforms the eschatological into existentialism in an ethic of radical obedience.

Existentialism and the Ethic of Radical Obedience. In an age of permissive psychology which has influenced the pulpit so that one is labeled "fundamentalist" if he calls for a decision in preaching, Bultmann is a refreshing note. There is scarcely a sermon, if any, that does not move from the indicative tense of proclamation to the imperative of what the listener's response might mean in the search for the authentic existence. In the sermon on Acts 17:22-32, he talks about hearing the word and obeying it. In the sermon Romans 8:18-27, we enjoy a sure hope if having heard, we choose. St. Matthew 11:28-30 with its message of the great invitation of Jesus invites the hearer to be a yoke bearer.

"Now" is the decisive moment. In a sermon dated July 27, 1938 (the only one of the twenty-one which has no Scripture heading), Bultmann says

²² Ibid., p. 108.

²³ Walter Leibrecht, (ed.), Religion and Culture, Essays in Honor of Paul Tillich (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959).

The New Testament pays no attention to these time periods which are so significant to us. It knows only one critical turning point of time - when the "time was fulfilled"; it knows only one "now" which in human life is lifted above the stream of time - the "now" when the word of God strikes a man and which becomes for him the decisive moment between time and eternity.²⁴

In the sermon on St. Matthew 11:2-6, Bultmann uses an Advent text about receiving the Lord. John's disciples have asked Jesus for John "Are you he who is come, or shall we look for another?" Bultmann wisely points out that Jesus forced John's disciples and us to answer for ourselves, and answer we must.

The sermon on St. John 8:12 and related passages calls for a vital decision if we are to enjoy the gifts from God. Near the end of the sermon, Bultmann raises the existential question "How much longer do you have to hear the Word?" In the sermon from St. Mark 13:31-33, he makes quite clear that the present is determined by an unconditional obligation. The call of eternity bears the duty of responsibility.

In the sermon on Luke 14:16-24 on the great banquet, Bultmann is preaching according to the calendar of lessons for the church year. After he had made his sermonic preparation, Russia's entry into the war took place. Loyal to his concept of God's word for today for you, he admits how the sermon has been developed but goes on to leave at least the present reader to see how Scripture proclaimed makes its demands clear.

²⁴Bultmann, This World and the Beyond, p. 93.

In his refocusing of the Biblical meaning of what it is to hear the word proclaimed, Bultmann reminds one that to hear the proclamation truly is to obey the God who addresses him in the proclamation. Indeed, language roots in Latin, German and French remind one that "to hear" is "to obey".²⁵ So the indicative tense of the verb calls forth the imperative and the theological properly understood becomes ethical, not pietistic moralism.²⁶

The working out of this ethic of radical obedience as it particularly affects the worker in the technological society is at the particular point that Bultmann judges our technological powers as a cause for dulling our hearing of the proclamation. So in the sermon on Acts 17:22-32, he attacks our idolatry of technique. In St. Matthew 11:2-6, he condemns the false hopes of technology. In St. Matthew 6:25-33, he reminds man that work cannot guarantee the future. In the sermon from Romans 8:18-27, he recognizes the wearing quality of work, which is helpless in itself to give meaning to existence. And, in the sermon from Revelation 3:14-20, he sympathizes with the emptiness brought on by the incapacity to work caused by sickness and old age.

That Bultmann might not be taken as entirely negative in his thoughts about work and the technological society, a re-reading of

²⁵ Thomas C. Oden, Radical Obedience, The Ethics of Rudolf Bultmann (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), p. 148.

²⁶ Bultmann, Jesus Christ and Mythology, pp. 76-77.

the sermon on Acts 17:22-32 indicates that he recognizes the worth of the advances as they are used for good and not evil. Herein is the temptation to be faced: to believe life is secure or to acknowledge our frailty and so to seek God in surrender and obedience.²⁷ The authentic life of obedience is inward detachment from the world and self-contrived securities with a surrender of self-confidence. At the same time it means a resolution to trust God completely.

Ambiguity and Certainty. It is essential in understanding the moment as the bearer of God's demands that Bultmann is quite aware of the ambiguity of life. In the sermon on Acts 17:22-32 he writes

The declaration that God is Judge calls our attention to the fact that all the phenomena of life are ambiguous and hence sources of temptation, the fact that we may use them for good or lose our souls to them. But we do in fact lose our souls to them if we believe them to be unequivocal, thus ceasing to feel their power to tempt and lead astray. We owe an account as to what we make of them. This however applies above all to ourselves, to the energies and impulses, the gifts and the passions of our inner being. These latter are by no means unequivocal, and not everything that springs from the instincts of blood and nature is good. Primitive man is aware of the frailty and the dubiety of his being, for he is aware of its dangers and does not suppose that he is master of himself. ²⁸

In spite of the ambiguity, each of the sermons evidences a certainty about the call of God which is authoritative without being authoritarian, commanding without being dogmatic. So in the sermon on St. Matthew 6:25-32, certainty is in terms of security. In the sermon on Genesis 8:22, certainty is in terms of forgiveness. In Philippians

²⁷Ibid., p. 17.

²⁸Ibid., p. 18.

3:7-14, it is in terms of power and God's gifts. The certainty of Romans 8:18-27 is in terms of a future and a hope. The sermon dated July 27, 1938 sees certainty in terms of peace.

What then are the particular contributions of Bultmann to our contemporary ethical scene? He has provided ethics with a new understanding of authentic existence as life lived in response to the kerygma. In other words, man is a being under requirement to respond to God. Bultmann's views of radical obedience deliver man from pietistic moralism without permitting an antinomian ethic of libertinism. So man is free as he obeys God. He has delivered the knowledge of God from theological gymnastics by indicating the existential relation of the knowledge of God to self-knowledge. His exposure of the relation between the eschatological and the existential and the indicative with the imperative makes all theology practical and personal. Above all, his reminder that the moment is the bearer of God's demands restores certainty of faith in an age of ambiguity and ambivalence.²⁹

In summary, if it is true as Thomas Oden suggests in Radical Obedience that our age is characterized by (1) the pervasive sense of moral ambiguity, (2) the divorce of ethics and exegesis, and (3) the hiatus between a high Christology and actual Christian obedience, then Bultmann is a weighty contributor to our understanding.³⁰ The answer to the dilemma of moral ambiguity lies in three directions which

29Oden, op. cit., p. 119.

30Ibid., p. 14.

include a new understanding of the relation between law and gospel; the relevance of forgiveness for the man caught in moral ambiguity; and the conviction that the demand of God is clear rather than ambiguous. At each of these levels we have witnessed Bultmann's contributions in this chapter. In the area of the relation between ethics and exegesis, Bultmann is thoroughly in the Reformation tradition wherein ethical thought is exegetical in orientation. Thus, all the sermons, included in the Marburg volume are thoroughly biblical in their orientation, for Bultmann is first of all a biblical scholar who has at the same time not failed in his awareness of the implications of scriptures for the moral life. So the Word is preached and the existential implications made clear. As to "the hiatus between a high Christology and actual Christian obedience", Bultmann operates in This World and the Beyond on two levels or spheres at the same time. He knows that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels" and he does not fail either in his understanding of the treasure or the vessels.³¹

III. RUDOLF BULTMANN AS A RESOURCE FOR PREACHING THE RESURRECTION

In approaching the preaching project on the resurrection focus for the field of work, one asks immediately, "How does Bultmann's understanding of the resurrection and man's response of radical obedience help the preacher in his orientation and preparation?" Three general answers come immediately to mind: First, Bultmann believes in

³¹Bultmann, This World and the Beyond, p. 212.

the power of proclamation in an age where preaching is questioned as a means of communication. Second, the cross and the resurrection are central to Bultmann's understanding of Christ and the authentic life. Third, Bultmann's sermons reveal a keen understanding and sympathy for man and his work in a technological era.

The general title for the sermon series "God's Victory and Ours" was chosen with the conviction that the resurrection is primarily a word of victory. Any reading of Bultmann's sermons supports this conviction. Furthermore, the really positive preacher believes that the average listener is looking for a sure word of victory, not just as far as God is concerned, but a sure word of victory for his own life, caught in an empty, meaningless ambiguity in the face of a rapidly changing world of work. Again, one is impressed with the solid kind of affirmation of what authentic existence is as God's victory in our lives when we choose God and not some base idolatry.

In the preaching project, the first two sermons were meant to reflect Bultmann's handling of the proclamation of the resurrection. In true Bultmann fashion, the preacher learned that if the resurrection is central to the gospel proclaimed, then it need not be reserved for funeral homilies or Easter Sunday. So the series was not even preached in Eastertide but in Kingdomtide. Indeed, every Sunday is the Lord's Day, Resurrection morn!

The first of the two sermons in the series reflecting Bultmann's influence bears the title "The Gospel for a Space Age". The introduction states the problem of ambiguity and ambivalence of

gospel and society in the light of the absurd, a current concept of meaninglessness, and, the gospel as a certainty to be proclaimed, if it is at all real. In true Bultmann fashion, searching questions must be asked as to the meaning of existence.

The sermon is an exegesis of I Corinthians 1:18-30 which contrasts those who live inauthentically and are perishing and those who live authentically and are being saved in the light of the Cross and the Resurrection. Those who are being saved are those who respond existentially in radical obedience to the scandal of the Cross.

An attempt was made to explore some of the idolatries of our age of absurdity, particularly as they affect our responses to daily work and the meaning sought from work, questioning at every turn "What is real? What is absurd? What is authentic? What is inauthentic?" An interpretation of the Jewish and Greek prototypes reveal some of the idolatries by which man in any generation blinds himself to the call of the cross. At the point of the intellectualism of the Greek, an attempt was made to "demythologize" the language to the extent that the hearer was encouraged not to limit his source of knowledge to mechanical intellectualism. The question of radical obedience was raised anew in terms of the kind of power and wisdom the hearer really hoped for.

The sermon then moved to Paul's second argument: the Church. Once again, Paul confronts the hearer with what is real power and wisdom and what is foolish and weak. The hearer is called on to choose between this world and the beyond as his basic orientation of

obedience. Indeed, Bultmann's understanding of the kerygmatic bearer role of the Church referred to earlier would have strengthened the presentation at this point.

Finally, Paul's own commitment is put up as an example of the how of belief and faith. Here is the certainty of the victory of the authentic personality whose self-knowledge is related intimately with his existential experience of God through the salvation event. Again the questions opening life to the response of radical obedience were left with the hearer who is called to make up his life before the proclamation of the gospel.

You see, Paul had had to make the basic decision as to where the power in his life came from. He chose as we all must choose between that which is absurd and that which is real. We are talking about God's victory and ours. Somehow that victory lies at the point of our choice. Be reminded that the word of the Cross, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, is folly to those who are perishing. But, to those who are being saved, it is the power of God. Real or absurd? Authentic or inauthentic. How are you making up your life?³²

The second sermon in the series bears the title "More than Moralism". (Cf. Appendix) In Bultmannian fashion the preacher of this sermon seeks to develop a clear understanding of the meaning of man's response to the cross and the resurrection in terms of radical obedience which on the one hand delivers man from the false bases of moralism while on the other hand, it keeps him from antinomian license. The danger of the age is that in the face of rapid change and shifting values, man will freeze in idolatry of false securities

³²J. Miles Acker, Jr., unpublished sermon series "God's Victory and Ours".

such as the pietistic moralism of the easy though equally empty cliche. Again, leading questions are raised as to some of the moralisms in business, sex, leisure, work, religion, and family. The empty sterility of moralism which is negative, drab, uninspiring and rigid is acknowledged. Radical obedience is then proposed as a viable alternative which the hearer might want to choose.

Using Romans 6:1-14, the sermon seeks to understand the nature of the Christian life at the same time proclaiming with Paul the motivation for choosing such an authentic life. In the light of God's purpose proclaimed in the cross and the resurrection of Christ, man's response is one of radical trust and faith.

What does Paul point to in the passage? In the basic style of Bultmann who is biblically oriented, Paul points to the fact that in the cross and the resurrection we come to the end of the age of tyranny of the sin of this world. There is a courage-producing certainty before this eschatological understanding of existence. Second, Paul reminds us that our response is one of radical obedience in yielding ourselves to God as instruments of righteousness. The hope and certainty is extended that in our response to the demands of God for the moment is our victory, here and now as well as there and then. An attempt was then made to interpret what it means to really hear God's Word proclaimed - that until a man responds in the obedience of the yielded life, he has not really heard God's Word.

Finally, Paul points us to the existential moment of decision in the belief that there is a new hope offered to man in the

expectations God has for the authentic life. This is life under new management which is beyond moralism which we can with some confidence and certainty know now.

. . . Now if you think this is rather abstract and far away, let me read one sentence from a letter written by a young woman who was a part of our community this summer. It was a very difficult summer for her. Reflecting now on the experiences of the summer she wrote: "If this summer was death, death of the original idea, death of the myths about God and idealism in our society, then I do think that this new year will be one of resurrection!" This is the new life to which God calls you and me and I tell you brethren, it is beyond moralism. It is the dynamic response to the call of God in our day. How will you answer? Will you obey Him or will you disobey him with your life? Radical obedience is of the essence of the life which is beyond moralism.³³

For the preacher of the sermons in the project, Bultmann was a very realistic resource who understands both the Scripture and the cross and the resurrection as well as the current scene. While the thesis will deal with the responses gained in the Pulpit Talk Back in a later chapter, it is worthy to note here that one of the most vital responses was in the sense of forgiveness before the proclamation of the cross and resurrection experienced by one of the men who was during those days experiencing real pain arising from an ambiguous work situation.

33 Ibid.

CHAPTER III

PAUL TILLICH: THE RESURRECTION AS SYMBOL

When it comes to understanding a man's theology or his preaching, it is helpful if one does not have to guess what that man's purpose is. In the preface to his first volume of sermons The Shaking of the Foundations, Tillich gives the reasons for his preaching and the publication of these sermons. Because many of his students as well as friends outside the Union Seminary community had indicated their difficulty with attempts at penetrating his theological position, he published the sermons with the further hope that the practical implications of his theology for the personal and social problems of society might be more clearly seen.¹

Beyond these two closely related reasons, Tillich had a third reason for the publication of his sermons. He had sensed early in his ministry in America that there were a large number of honest seekers outside the traditional Christian circle who would not accept a sermon in traditional biblical terms. Thus, in the three volumes of sermons published, he seeks a language and a system by which he hopes to communicate with this broader community. In one sense, this theology is "apologetic" (by Tillich's own words) but in another sense, his approach is different from the apologetic and kerygmatic

¹Paul Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), preface.

theologies as an "answering" theology, employing the method of correlation.²

This method of a highly systematized, often abstract theology combined with a concrete, vital preaching style has been observed by those who have studied Tillich. David Roberts, in the symposium The Theology of Paul Tillich,³ speaks of the disparity between the two presentation forms used by Tillich as does the Roman Catholic, George H. Tavard in Paul Tillich and the Christian Message. The latter, speaking specifically about Tillich's dealing with the resurrection, writes that "Tillich as preacher is infinitely more faithful to the Word than Tillich as system-builder."⁴

Having the presentation of Paul Tillich in the chapter which follows the chapter on Rudolf Bultmann, a short comparison between the two is useful for our understanding of both men's theological approach. Dr. John Cobb in his book, Living Options in Protestant Theology makes just such a simple presentation. He writes

The theology of Paul Tillich has many similarities to that of Rudolf Bultmann, but at each of the critical points in Bultmann's thought, Tillich takes a different turn. We have seen that Bultmann has an understanding of the relation of God and the world that he rests upon faith in conjunction with what he takes to be the modern world view. He attempts systematically to avoid dependence on speculative philosophy. Tillich fully recognizes

²Ibid., preface. (cf. also John Cobb, Living Options in Protestant Theology (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), p. 261.

³Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall, (eds.), The Theology of Paul Tillich (New York: Macmillan, 1964), p. 130.

⁴George H. Tavard, Paul Tillich and the Christian Message (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962), p. 176.

the role of philosophy in dealing with God and the world as well as with man's self-understanding. Bultmann clings to the language of the acts of God in such a way as to maintain, for faith, the absolute and unique decisiveness of the event Jesus Christ. Tillich sees all events as grounded in God but understands the uniqueness of the Christ-event in terms of its transparency to the ground of being rather than in terms of a unique act of God in relation to it. Bultmann holds that Christian faith is faith in God's act in Christ. Tillich is concerned primarily with the new mode of existence that has become effective through that event.⁵

This chapter will consider in turn, (1) Tillich's treatment of the resurrection of Jesus; (2) the ethical implications of his system; (3) his contributions to the preacher's understanding in preparation for the preaching of the resurrection as used in the project sermon series, "God's Victory and Ours".

I. THE RESURRECTION IN THE PREACHING AND THEOLOGY OF PAUL TILLICH

The sermons of Paul Tillich are published in three small volumes: The Shaking of the Foundations (1948); The New Being (1955); and The Eternal Now (1963). The first volume of twenty-two sermons are in large part on texts from Isaiah, Psalms, Romans and I Corinthians, and seeks to deal with the changing structures of our times. The second volume, largely drawn from the Gospels and the epistles of Paul deals with the implications of the "new being" as love, freedom and fulfillment. The third volume, The Eternal Now, again largely drawn from the Gospels and the epistles, seeks to cause men to become aware of the human predicament, the divine reality and

⁵Ibid., p. 259.

the challenge to man. In his preaching, Tillich is not attempting to defend tradition or particular exegesis of Scripture but to deal with the big questions that man is directing to life in search for meaning. In all occasions, Tillich operates with the conviction "that ultimate reality is decisively manifest to us in Jesus as the Christ."⁶

Myths and Symbols (Demythologizing and Deliteralizing). To speak of God signifies that man must use language but since the divine being transcends the realm of language, man must use symbols to communicate. Now signs point to an entity without any necessity of inner unity with that entity. "Every religious symbol negates itself in the literal meaning, but it affirms itself in its self-transcending meaning. It is not a sign pointing to something with which it has no inner relationships. It represents the power and meaning of what is symbolized through participation."⁷

To receive the historical fact, Jesus of Nazareth, the christological symbols are basic. But these symbols must be taken as symbols or they will lose their meaning if taken literally. Tillich would insist on "deliteralization" in contrast with Bultmann's "demythologizing" of the scriptures. For Tillich, demythologizing can mean two things. The first is a fight against the literalistic distortion

.⁶Ibid., p. 276.

⁷Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), II:9. (cf. also his "Martin Buber 1878-1965," Pastoral Psychology, XVI:156 (September 1965), 52.)

of symbols and myths. The second is the removal of the myth as a valid religious expression, substituting science or morals in its place. Tillich's "deliteralization" accepts the former concept of demythologization while rejecting the latter concept.⁸ Literalism makes many of these symbols absurd or nonexistent and so the theologian is faced with the task of reinterpretation. The individual theologian cannot condemn a symbol to death. Only the consciousness of the living church can do so, and then only when the symbol fails to express what it is meant to express. And when such a symbol dies from usage, the reality to which it pointed is not dependent on it for its ultimate expression.⁹

The New Testament symbols seek to express the New Being in Jesus as the Christ. While there are numerous symbols pointing to this New Being, the New Testament selects two as being central to expressing on the one hand, Christ's subjection to existence, and on the other hand, his conquest of existence. In the symbol of the "Cross of Christ", His subjection to existence is expressed; in the "Resurrection of the Christ", His conquest of existence is expressed.¹⁰

When one comes to the cross and resurrection theme in Tillich's sermons, there is no such centrality to his preaching as in Bultmann, though certainly the resurrection is the release of the New Being in Christ which is central to his thought. A part of the difference

⁸Ibid., II:152-53.

⁹Ibid., II:164-65.

¹⁰Ibid., II: 152-53.

between Bultmann and Tillich is at this precise point. For Bultmann, the cross and resurrection were the central, mighty acts of God. For Tillich, the central interest is in the questions of ultimate importance to man as he seeks answers using the perceptive tools of philosophical concepts and descriptions. As a result there are considerably fewer sermons which even mention the cross or the resurrection of Christ in Tillich than in Bultmann.

In both the sermons "Nature Mourns for a Lost Good" and "Born in the Grave," Tillich emphasizes what is a central anxiety of man - death. Here in Christ, one faces the existential estrangement of life in death. He writes in "Born in the Grave"

We often hide the seriousness of the "buried" in the Creed, not only for the Christ, but also for ourselves, by imagining that not we shall be buried, but only a comparatively unimportant part of us, the physical body. That is not what the Creed implies. It is the same subject, Jesus Christ, of whom it is said that He suffered and that He was buried and that He was resurrected. He was buried, He - His whole personality - was removed from the earth. The same is true of us. We shall die, we - our personality, from which we cannot separate our body as an accidental part - shall be buried.¹¹

In this sense, Tillich clarifies the difference between the Platonic doctrine of immortality and the biblical doctrine of resurrection. For him, the non-Christian, pseudo-Platonic form of continuation of temporal life after death without a body is a popular superstition.¹²

¹¹ Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations., pp. 166-67. (cf. also Chapter 6, "Escape from God" and Chapter 21, "The Destruction of Death")

¹² Tillich, Systematic Theology, III:409-410.

In the cross of Christ, we see what is a highly probable fact or event in Him who surrenders to the ultimate consequence of existence - death under the conditions of estrangement. The cross is both event and symbol.

Certainly, the Cross of Jesus is seen as an event that happened in time and space. But, as the Cross of Jesus who is the Christ, it is a symbol and a part of a myth. It is the myth of the bearer of the new eon who suffers the death of a convict and slave under the powers of the old eon which he is to conquer. This Cross, whatever the historical circumstances may have been, is a symbol based on a fact.¹³

The resurrection is a symbol which became an event. The resurrection symbol so grasped the disciples and their belief in Jesus that as the Christ He became the Messiah. While historical research can never give more than probable answers at the point of the resurrection, faith in the resurrection is neither positively nor negatively dependent for the answer. Faith brings the real certainty of being grasped by the power of the New Being. Again, neither historical conviction nor biblical authority serve as certain proofs where the resurrection is concerned.¹⁴

In his sermon on "Nature Mourns for a Lost Good," he writes

. . . The resurrection of the body - not an immortal soul - is the symbol of the victory over death. The bodiless spirit (and this is the meaning of all these images) is not the aim of creation; the purpose of salvation is not the abstract intellect or a natureless moral personality. . .¹⁵

¹³ Ibid., II:152-53.

¹⁴ Ibid., II:154-55.

¹⁵ Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations, p. 85.

The New Being. Crucial to Tillich's understanding of the resurrection is his concept of the new being. In his sermon on "The New Being" he sums up what for him is the core of the Christian message in Paul's message of a "New Creation." The sermon is based on words from Paul who says: "If anyone is in union with Christ he is a new being; the old state of things has passed away; there is a new state of things." In Christ the contradiction between essential being and existential being has been overcome and the process of overcoming may be participated in. In this appearance of the New Being above essence and existence is a historical event which overcomes existence by transforming it.¹⁶

So in "The New Being," Tillich asks "What is this New Being?"

He replies

. . . The New Being is not something that simply takes the place of the Old Being. But it is a renewal of the Old which has been corrupted, distorted, split and almost destroyed. But not wholly destroyed. Salvation does not destroy creation; but it transforms the Old Creation into a New one. Therefore we can speak of the New in terms of re-newal: The threefold "re", namely, re-conciliation, re-union, re-surrection.¹⁷

In talking about the re-surrection theme of re-newal, Tillich indicates that often resurrection leaves the connotation of dead bodies being raised from the grave when in reality resurrection means the victory of a new state of things as the New Being is born out of the death of the Old. Continuing he says

¹⁶Paul Tillich, The New Being (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 17.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 19-20. (cf. also his Systematic Theology, III:414.)

. . . Resurrection is not an event that might happen in some remote future, but it is the power of the New Being to create life out of death, here and now, today and tomorrow. Where there is a New Being, there is resurrection, namely, the creation into eternity out of every moment of time. The Old Being has the mark of disintegration and death. The New Being puts a new mark over the old one. Out of disintegration and death something is born of eternal significance. That which is immersed in dissolution emerges in a New Creation. Resurrection happens now, or it does not happen at all. It happens in us and around us, in soul and history, in nature and universe.¹⁸

Dealing with the New Being in terms of love, freedom and fulfillment, Tillich concludes the book indicating that in the light of the resurrection, "the universe is no longer what it once was; nature has received another meaning; history is transformed and you and I are no more, and should not be any more, what we were before."¹⁹

II. TILLICH'S ETHICAL CONCEPT

Flowing from his understanding of the New Being, Tillich searches for an immovable principle of ethics which unites absoluteness with openness to all historical relativities. He finds this in the New Being as love. Theodor Siegfried in The Theology of Paul Tillich questions how this ethical absolute works itself out in specific areas.²⁰

In the section of the same work in which the theologian being considered has the opportunity of reply to questions raised, Tillich responds to Siegfried's impression that he neglects the horizontal line of ethics for the sake of the vertical. Tillich indicates that

¹⁸Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 179.

²⁰Kegley, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

he follows the line of Augustine and the Reformation in that unbelief or estrangement from God is the root of sin. For the horizontal line of ethics, one should consult his writings on religious socialism where he has emphasized the Kingdom of God. Earlier in his reply, he clarified his system of Christian ethics when he said

. . . Essentially, my thesis is that Christian ethics is a description of man in his created goodness, his disrupted existence, and his participation in the New Being--all this from the point of view of his action toward other beings, himself, and the ground and aim of his being. If this is done, concrete application of it to the ever changing problems of ethical existence are as much needed as concrete applications of the apologetic principles to the ever changing apologetic scene. . .²¹

In his sermon on "The Yoke of Religion," he expresses the ethical application which follows from the New Being. He encourages one not to ask how any more than he would ask how good fruits develop from the goodness of a tree. "They follow; action follows being, and new action, better action, stronger action, follows new being, better being, stronger being. . . Our actions would be more creative, more conquering, conquering the tragedy of our time, if they grew out of a more profound level of our life. For our creative depth is the depth in which we are quiet."²²

In a trilogy of sermons on the theologian in The Shaking of the Foundations, Tillich speaks in turn about the Believing theologian, the Self-Surrendering theologian and finally about the Answering

²¹ Ibid., pp. 344 ff.

²² Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations, pp. 102-03.

theologian. In spite of the weakness of the Answering theologian in his participation in the weaknesses and error of all men, he is able to answer their questions through the power of his being grounded in the New Being in Christ.²³ Thus in Tillich's concept of correlation where the world asks questions of the Church and the Christian, each is to be proclaimed as the bearer of the New Being.²⁴ In the New Being, a man enters a new level of life and is healed. Many of the sermons in The Eternal Now such as "Heal the Sick; Cast Out the Demons"²⁵ reflect the power of the healing answer of the New Being to the healing of the world.

In conclusion, one asks "What are the significant contributions of Paul Tillich to the preaching of the resurrection with its meaning for our contemporary world?" Several conclusions might be made.

1. Tillich takes death seriously and as a symbol, death represents man's finiteness and the end and limits of life.
2. Tillich takes seriously the questions which man asks in search for meaning in life. His method of correlation is important both in the development of an answering theology or ethic and in the search for language which communicates to the present generation.
3. His concept of ultimate concern and an ultimate ground of being as being determinative of being or non-being presents God as a

²³ Ibid., pp. 126-27.

²⁴ Cobb, op. cit., p. 275 (cf. also Tillich, Systematic Theology).

²⁵ Paul Tillich, The Eternal Now (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), p. 58 ff.

rock-bottom reality of love, readily available through the New Being.

4. His concept of the New Being, released through the resurrection reminds one that each historical period must seek out its own relation to God on the basis of that final revelation and correspondingly each period or culture has its own special capability to receive this continuing revelation.

5. The resurrection beyond the cross and death is God's answer to the existential estrangement in which we all participate, offering hope for the fulfillment of the New Being in our lives in love and with freedom.

III. PAUL TILLICH AS A RESOURCE FOR PREACHING THE RESURRECTION

The first sermon preached in the series "God's Victory and Ours" to show the influence of the theology and ethic of Paul Tillich is "Ultimately Yours." The central thrust of the sermon was to take seriously man's search for an answer in the face of the anxiety-producing questions coming from the changing tides of time. In the face of these changing tides, man wonders about the end of life. He must also face the question as to what degree he lives each day so that the end of life will be the destination, even destiny, which he seeks and covets for himself.

The first question was rephrased in terms of a current cliche which is often spoken in a question form "Is it true that I make my own heaven or hell on earth?" This question is an eschatological question, dealing with the end of life.

Turning to Romans chapter 8, the distinction between ultimate choice or concern and something less than that is considered. In this same area, Tillich's concept of the finality of death rather than a pseudo-Platonic concept of immortality is considered basic as we seek to understand what is our ultimate concern. Here is a unifying core for the organization of life with meaning.

Paul goes on to point out that the resurrection which releases the New Being is God's answer to the questions we raise as to the end of existence. This ultimate destination is personal and purposeful. Our decision in favor of this ultimate concern offered through the resurrection of Jesus as the Christ offers love, freedom and fulfillment. (This sermon is included in the appendix.)

The second sermon deals directly with death as a question mark raised in life which is answered by resurrection as an exclamation point to existence and its meaning. Resurrection is the Christian answer not the superstition of immortality. Resurrection comes with the dying to the basic estrangement of sin and the old way to be born as a New Being - a New Creation. Such a hope in the face of death should give a serious ground for the reconsideration of the meaning of the general funeral service and to life. Also, in the light of this victory, the Church comes into existence as a witness to this New Being. This sermon exposed the seriousness of death which in turn reveals the scope of the resurrection and the New Being. This sermon disturbed deeply those who had previously clung to immortality as the answer to death.

CHAPTER IV

EMIL BRUNNER: THE RESURRECTION AS ENCOUNTER

The work of Emil Brunner might be stylized as "the third man theme" - somewhere between Barth and Bultmann. While Brunner for some years was a close associate of Karl Barth, they came to a parting of the ways in 1934. With the rise of Bultmann's theology of demythologization, the gulf between Barth and Brunner no longer seemed so great.

Brunner's expressed intent in his The Theology of Crisis was to present a distinctive approach to theology which would be a third way between liberalism and orthodoxy, between subjectivism and objectivism.¹ For Brunner, liberalism has thought too much outside the area of faith. Brunner's theology professes to begin with faith and to serve faith. Faith, rather than being man-centered, is somewhere in between God and man in truth as encounter. On the other side, orthodoxy has tended to so emphasize and to literalize the Bible that it fails to distinguish between God's Word and man's words. Such an approach, verging on bibliolatry, has furthermore obscured the Christ.² Brunner would suggest that in the Bible we have the witness to Jesus Christ as God's self-disclosure to man. We begin with the encounter of Jesus Christ and not with loyalty to biblical dogmas. Again, faith,

¹Emil Brunner, The Theology of Crisis (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 22.

²Ibid., pp. 19-20.

rather than being God-centered, is somewhere in between God and man in "the divine-human encounter."

The central thrust of Brunner's theology is that in Jesus Christ as the Mediator, we meet God as Person. This is a translation of Martin Buber's "I-thou" into Protestant thought. In such a dynamic encounter, God reveals himself, faith is an actuality, and theological knowledge becomes possible.³

In the encounter with Jesus, God reveals himself as Person,⁴ as agape-love⁵ and as Lord.⁶ When Brunner comes to Volume Two of his Dogmatics and discusses the work and the person of Jesus, there is a systematic parallelism with the Person of God and the work and person of Jesus. So the work of Jesus includes (1) his prophetic office with his role of revelation as proclamation; (2) his priestly office with its role of atonement through the ministry to sinners; and (3) his kingly role with its role of kingship in the victory over the powers of sin and death.⁷

The truth which resulted from this encounter was used by the primitive church for a defense, instruction and for guidance.⁸ A major note in Brunner is his "missionary theology" (or, eristics), whose

³Emil Brunner, The Divine-Human Encounter (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1943), chapter 2.

⁴Emil Brunner, Dogmatics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1950), I:61, 121-124, 139-141.

⁵Ibid., I:183-199.

⁶Ibid., I:137-150.

⁷Ibid., II:271-305.

⁸Ibid., I:9-13, 93-96.

task is not just to defend the faith as in apologetics but rather to attack the ideologies that criticize the faith and to do it in a positive form by seeking to remove the barriers to belief. The missionary theology is addressed to the unbeliever from the viewpoint of faith, seeking to understand his apartness and to lead him to a sense of his need for Christ in such a way that he is willing to choose faith for himself.⁹

Finally, one must remember that Brunner does not simply talk about a "missionary theology" from an ivory tower, removed from life. He preached regularly until recently in the Zurich Frauenmunster Cathedral before a large audience from all walks of life. His sermons are reported to be a blend of the "evangelistic sermon" for the edification of believers and those inside the church, and of the "missionary sermon" for unbelievers and those outside the church.

Describing Brunner as a preacher, Peter Vogelsanger in The Theology of Brunner writes the following in his essay "Brunner as Apologist":

. . . His sermon is more and more a preaching of the elementary ideas of Christian faith and its confrontation with the contemporary ways of thinking and living. With his advancing age it becomes a highly charismatic mixture of fatherly admonition and lapidary evangelization. He renounces not only all bombast, but also all theological details. One could say: it is appropriate for the community in its concentration on the main things; it is missionary in its aggressiveness. It does not leave man in his equanimity; it stirs him out of his pious or worldly self-confidence, reveals his excuses, and pursues him to his hiding

⁹Ibid., I:98-103.

places in order to deliver him to the One who alone is his rescue and his peace. And with all this it does not exclude thinking but utilizes it fully. And this, not an exercise in rhetoric, is what makes his sermon so impressive.¹⁰

Because of the closeness between the theological posture and preaching posture of Brunner, this chapter will use excerpts from three avowedly resurrection sermons ("Easter Certainty"; "I Am the Resurrection"; and "Death and Resurrection") to present (1) Brunner's concept of the resurrection; (2) his deep awareness of the ethical implications of the resurrection, especially for man and his work; and, (3) the implications of Brunner's handling of the resurrection and its ethical fruits for the concerned preacher today.

I. THE RESURRECTION AS ENCOUNTER

To approach the resurrection in Brunner, this section will consider in turn (1) Sin and death; (2) Cross and resurrection; and, (3) Resurrection victory.

Sin and Death. In each of the three sermons under consideration, sin and death are spoken of almost always together. At one place, Brunner in speaking of nihilism and its relation to death where life becomes meaningless and vain remarks "Death and nothingness belong together, for death is the great leveller and annihilator."¹¹

¹⁰Charles W. Kegley and Robert Bretall, (eds.), The Theology of Emil Brunner (New York: Macmillan, 1962), p. 300.

¹¹Emil Brunner, The Great Invitation and Other Sermons (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955), p. 128.

In "Easter Certainty," Brunner also speaks of the certainty of death, wherein life and everything we value will be destroyed. "Death is the end."¹² In "Death and Resurrection" he paraphrases the saying "all roads lead to Rome" to say "all roads lead to death." Death is pictured as "the heir of all things," "the universal inheritor" devouring everything. Concluding the section on death's power, he says

At heart we all know this very well and from this source flow all our fears, cares, griefs. Our awareness of death and its terrible reality is the great dark shadow which overshadows the whole of human life and the life of every individual. Above all that we men are able to accomplish, there echoes the scornful mockery of death: all your human activity and effort are vain, in the end, I, nothingness, engulf everything. I am the universal inheritor.¹³

The reality and certainty of death are strong lines etched into Brunner's theology and preaching of the resurrection. Why? One clue is to be found in the dedication of his major work in this area Eternal Hope, published in 1953. The dedication is to his two sons, Peter and Thomas, who died in 1942 and 1952. In an autobiographical sketch written for Kegley and Bretall's The Theology of Emil Brunner, he wrote

During the following years two of our sons were taken from us by illness and accident. Their deaths made their impact upon my theological work, as can be seen in my treatment of the problem of eschatology, especially in Das Ewige Als Zukunft Und Gegenwart (Eternal Hope, 1953).¹⁴

¹²Emil Brunner, I Believe in the Living God, Sermons on the Apostles' Creed (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 159.

¹³Brunner, The Great Invitation . . ., pp. 128-129.

¹⁴Kegley, op. cit., p. 13.

(This work is incorporated in a later volume of the Dogmatics but was finished at an earlier date to be used in the World Council of Churches meeting in Evanston in 1954 where the theme was "Christ the Hope of the World.")

In this volume Eternal Hope, Brunner indicates that only in the area of Christian faith are the two factors of sin and death seen as a unity. Therefore in it alone is the force which conquers both sin and death: the redemptive action of Jesus Christ.¹⁵ These two factors are both linked together as contrary to 'nature'. "The being a sinner and the having to die -- are necessarily linked because separation from God implies separation from life, manifested ultimately in physical dying."¹⁶

Death is no such simple thing as the biological fact of the extinction of life. Rather in the death of my "I", my historical, earthly existence with its deepest roots affected by the separation from God dies. Saint that I may be as a Christian, I am still a sinner before God. "Not my body dies; I die. I can relegate dying to my inferior being just as little as I can relegate my evil. For I myself am a sinner totus ego."¹⁷ And, the essence of this death is hidden in the mystery of God.

Yet, in this dying begins the resurrection from the dead. For Brunner "not only death but also life is relevant to the act of dying.

¹⁵Emil Brunner, Eternal Hope (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), p. 95.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 103.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 102.

The deep implications of death are revealed in the fact that with dying begins the resurrection of the dead. . . As the death of Adam spells my spiritual death, so the death of Christ gives me eternal life; not merely me, but all who belong to the new humanity and the new world of the resurrection.¹⁸ Thus it is that in the resurrection something not only happens in history but historical existence is done away.¹⁹

Cross and Resurrection. In the sermon "Death and Resurrection," Brunner affirms the fact of the cross and death of Christ. He says, "Of course Jesus died visibly to all and died indeed upon the Cross. Again, this Jesus was buried. But the grave had no power to entomb Him: . . ."²⁰

In the sermon "Easter Certainty," the approach is to see the relation of the cross and the resurrection in terms of the necessary interrelatedness of Good Friday and Easter. Without one or the other, the whole purpose of God is compromised.²¹

In the sermon on "Death and Resurrection," Brunner brings the reader to face the meaning of the cross through which God gives the victory in the resurrection. The reader is asked to face the inseparable relationship not just in Christ's life but also in his own.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 105.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 81.

.²⁰Brunner, The Great Invitation . . ., p. 131.

²¹Brunner, I Believe in . . ., p. 91.

. . . We can only do so if, just as we are to enter into the resurrection life of Jesus Christ, we also enter into His death. These two aspects are indissolubly linked together: it is impossible to have the one without the other! Whoever is not willing to die with Him, cannot live with Him either. But to die with Him means: to devote our lives to the service of others and to sacrifice our pride and self-righteousness by faith in Him, who for our sakes had to sacrifice His life on the Cross. Only through the Cross of Jesus could the way lead to His resurrection; only through our dying with Him can our way lead to resurrection with Him.²²

In the cross and the resurrection, Brunner points to the unique event by which God discloses Himself to the world in such a way that time and eternity are seen in a different light. Existence takes on a new meaning in the light of the eph hapax of history in that once-for-all quality of His cross and resurrection. Here is a new orientation for life. Here is the perfect self-giving of God to His creation taking place on the cross and being completed in the resurrection. "The question of meaning is solved by the life with Christ."²³

In the cross, the sinner is faced with the life-giving significance of the death of Christ. In some deep, strange way the sinner who has forfeited his life discovers that he now owes his life to God. At the same time that the cross exposes us, it also promises us the unconditioned grace and love of God. Only now we are able to bear the pain of self-recognition in the awareness of the fact of forgiveness. So in the cross, the crucified Son of God not only

²²Brunner, The Great Invitation . . ., p. 132.

²³Brunner, Eternal Hope, pp. 85, 47-48.

prophetically reveals the love of God, He also atones in ministry to sinners in fulfillment of His priestly role. In Brunner's mind, the disappearance of the idea of atonement from modern jurisprudence is one of the marked symptoms of the secularization of contemporary thought and a factor making for the disintegration of society.²⁴

But the crucified Son of God revealed in the crucifixion is not a tragic victim but rather the victor over sin and death. By that decisive fact, God is present with us and we with Him as the veil of hiddenness is removed.

The Cross is only redemptive if it includes the certitude of resurrection. It is of the essence of faith that it is aware of itself as a provisional state which will eventually be superseded by the ultimacy of vision. Faith without hope is just as meaningless as faith without love. 'If Christ be not risen then your faith is vain and ye are yet in your sins.' But the resurrection of Christ, who through faith has become our new life, implies our resurrection at his future coming.²⁵

In his book Eternal Hope, Brunner emphasizes the importance and significance of the resurrection in relation to the cross by reference to Bultmann's position. For Brunner the significance of the death of Christ is only possible when Jesus Christ is also proclaimed as the risen Lord. In Bultmann's case, the resurrection is simply a form of expressing our faith in the saving significance of His death on the cross. The miracle of the resurrection is for Brunner the presupposition for belief in the atoning significance of Christ's death.²⁶

²⁴Ibid., p. 108.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 137-138.

²⁶Ibid., p. 110.

Resurrection victory. In the sermon "Death and Resurrection," the victory of the resurrection is over death, through the unconditionally unique man. So Brunner writes

. . . Death engulfs all, tirelessly, effortlessly. But this One - death could not hold him. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is an unconditionally unique event, as also Jesus Christ Himself was an unconditionally unique man: the God-Man, in whom God Himself was acting and speaking.²⁷

A part of the resurrection victory is in terms of "the inheritance" of a living hope and an eternal inheritance. Brunner resorts to the biblical metaphors of the Kingdom of God and eternal life. For him these concepts point to realities beyond the limits of this world and beyond our understanding. In the eternal life of the world to come, death and sorrow, sin and transitoriness are banished. Here the life of perfect love of the very being of God is showered upon us. In our earthly communion with neighbor and God is a foretaste of the joys of eternal life.

Brunner cautions the reader at this point as to the fulfillment which is to come when he says

. . . We need not and should not wish to picture to ourselves the joys of heaven and of eternal life. By such attempts, we can only fall into the indulgence of fantasy. But we ought to know that it is the fulfillment of the end of all human wishes - for what folly lurks in our own secret desires - but the fulfillment of our deepest longings and our true destiny.²⁸

In the sermon "Easter Certainty," Brunner suggests that the resurrection victory is an affirmation that one has been reconciled

²⁷Brunner, The Great Invitation . . ., pp. 130-131.

²⁸Ibid., p. 132.

to God through Jesus' act of reconciliation. Here we have encountered the living way, the Mediator, who is Redeemer and Reconciler.²⁹ So he writes

. . . Now you already stand at the beginning of the new, eternal life. Now you know what the Lord means when he says: 'He who believes in me has eternal life.' Upon that, everything therefore depends: being reconciled to God, forgiveness of sins, removal of the separation between you and God, joyful access to God, and peace with God through Jesus Christ who gives you on the cross the Father's love and with it eternal life.³⁰

Concluding this sermon in a burst of confidence, he fairly shouts

. . . Therefore that is the real meaning of this temporal life, that we grow into the eternal life so that this temporal life may show something of the glory of eternal life. Therefore, let us shout: Take the eternal life to which you are called! Amen.³¹

What Brunner is saying through these sermons is that the victory of the resurrection is first God's breaking into history and existence to share His own unique, eternal love to all men. This incomprehensible event is the cancellation of space-time existence. Yet at the same time the Risen Lord is seen as the Jesus whom the disciples knew in His earthly life and at the same time different than he was in His earthly life.³²

Second, in the resurrection victory, the new day has dawned and with it a life which differentiates believers and unbelievers,

²⁹Brunner, I Believe in . . ., p. 93.

³⁰Ibid., p. 94.

³¹Ibid., p. 97.

³²Brunner, Eternal Hope, p. 144. Cf. also Emil Brunner, The Scandal of Christianity (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1950), pp. 111-112.

making the former members of the Body of Christ in which are evident the life and gifts of the Holy Spirit. In this sense, Christians do not live between the ages so much as in the initial stages of this coming world.³³

Third, one of the plainest signs of the new life is the certainty in the resurrection victory that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. By the fact of God's love, death has lost its sting. "For if it is true that the love which we have in Christ is the love of God, thus the presence and the life of God, then that fact implies that nothing can separate me from this love, from the knowledge that we have eternal life."³⁴

Fourth, the new life which is a fruit of the resurrection victory is something more than immortality in the Platonic sense. Jesus is not awakened to physical life but to a spiritual corporeality which manifests itself in space and at the same time, overcomes the limitations of space. In this concept of the resurrection body, the wholeness, the I of the individual is called to rise again in the full integrity of personal existence.³⁵

Fifth, the resurrection victory leaves one with a living hope that because we have already had part in eternal life here and now, we expect the victory day of resurrection. This living hope is not only a joy and a comfort now but it is also a controlling and moving

³³Ibid., pp. 145-46.

³⁴Ibid., p. 147.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 148-49. Cf. also his I Believe in . . ., p. 158.

power in our daily actions combining with faith and love - "the three dimensional existence in time of the Christian Church."³⁶

Sixth, what has been said here is that in the resurrection victory, Christ becomes Lord of all life, as in obedience we cease to want to be our own lord. And in that lordship, is our perfect freedom. Herein is revealed the sovereignty of God.³⁷

Seventh, the resurrection victory resulted in the formation of the Christian Church. The Church is the resurrection victory in the life of those who fled from the cross and death on Good Friday not just to return but also to go out to conquer the world with their knowledge of Christ, just because in the revelation of Jesus Christ in the resurrection they knew Him as the Risen One and the living, present Saviour, founding in them a new life.³⁸

And hence from this understanding of the resurrection victory in terms of His Lordship over the Church, Brunner moves to his interpretation of the Kingdom of God, where Christ reigns in glory. For him, the Church is an analogy for the Kingdom of God and more than that, it is the initiation and seed for the Kingdom. "For here Jesus Christ reigns as king but His rule is a free gift and a creating freedom, and the ecclesia is a unity in love embracing all mankind."³⁹ So from His coming there arises the Church as the first-fruits of the

³⁶Brunner, The Scandal of Christianity, pp. 106-07.

³⁷Brunner, I Believe in . . ., p. 154.

³⁸Brunner, Eternal Hope, p. 143.

³⁹Ibid., p. 160.

Kingdom of God, "so from His coming in glory there arises the Kingdom of God as the consummation of human history."⁴⁰

II. THE ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESURRECTION IN BRUNNER FOR MAN AND HIS WORK

In the sermon "Easter Certainty," Brunner views work as a "premature security" which man clings to in the face of his anxiety about death and the incumbent hopelessness which engulfs life. He goes on to say "it is the original cause of the wild, harsh competitive struggle in business life." A little later he says "But from this comes also vice, the seeking of pleasure, the demand for newer and newer attractions."⁴¹ In Brunner's eyes, we are anxious in the face of death "not because we live in the world but because we live in the world without God."⁴²

In the sermon "I Am the Resurrection," he views our anxiety about death as affecting our view of work by living as if what takes place here is all that there is for life.

. . . We have made a kind of compromise with the modern worshipers of this-world and despisers of the other world by thinking in some such way: This visible, earthly world is still God's creation: one should not condemn it as a valley of tears; it is really the miracle of God. And this earthly life is the life that God gives us, which it is our task to develop. Here is our place of work, the vineyard in which the Lord calls and places us. Here family and native land, vocation and human duty, demand our

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 167.

⁴¹ Brunner, I Believe in . . ., p. 88.

⁴² Ibid., p. 89.

whole attention. . . Therefore we must, so long as life still lasts, give our whole attention to it and can contently allow what awaits us on the other side of death's line to come upon us when it comes. Is it not true that we have taken just about such a position to this question?⁴³

In an article in a series on "What Shall I Preach to a Fear-Stricken Age?" which appeared in The Christian Century on July 11, 1951, Brunner responded that what makes preaching so difficult, if not impossible is the current understanding of the gospel as "the illusion of universal progress" where in reality the theme of the New Testament is neither temporal reform nor temporal betterment but rather eternal salvation, which is the fruit of the resurrection victory. In spite of our all-out effort for accomplishment in function of action and efficiency, what is far more important is the attitude behind it of love. There will always be room for faith and love in even the most inhuman social machinery.⁴⁴

One of the important things to note about Brunner is his lively interest to apply the insights of his field to the current problems of the day. It is in this sense that he holds a dual professorship in systematic and practical theology. Also of importance is his participation in discussion groups of various professional disciplines to probe with them the nature and aim of their work.⁴⁵ His great work The Divine Imperative is a definite attempt to

⁴³Ibid., pp. 152-53.

⁴⁴Emil Brunner, "A Great Time for the Preacher." Christian Century, LXVIII (July 11, 1951), 816-17.

⁴⁵Kegley, op. cit., p. xiii.

interpret God's orders for the real world of the twentieth century.

At the same time that these affirmative statements are made, one reviewer faults him, in spite of his desire for dialogue, with clinging too closely to traditional theological structures and verbiage in speaking meaningfully to the doubt and anxiety of our age.⁴⁶

To consider the ethic of Emil Brunner one must recognize that for him trustful obedience is the necessary corollary of faith. In this sense belief is existential as an event in the sphere of a man's personal life. In the living God who confronts a man in Christ, a claim is laid on a man's will calling for surrender to the self-offering Redeemer. "Faith in Jesus Christ implies a total transformation of one's personal existence."⁴⁷

One of the central notes of influence in Brunner's ethics is the concept of Christian hope. N. H. Søe is correct in his essay "The Personal Ethics of Emil Brunner" when he suggests that while Brunner does not have a great deal to say directly of eschatology, his works are permeated with a sense of the Christian hope. Without this basic understanding, his ethic does not make sense.⁴⁸

Brunner distinguishes between hope in terms of immediate, short-term hope and hope in a more ultimate sense. He recognizes a serious decline in the latter form of hope even while we manage to

⁴⁶ Robert H. Bryant, "The Theology of Emil Brunner: Pro and Con," Christian Century, LXXXI (January 15, 1964), 81-84.

⁴⁷ Brunner, Eternal Hope, p. 37.

⁴⁸ Kegley, op. cit., p. 261.

muddle through life.⁴⁹ The belief in the coming of the Kingdom of God sets an understanding of what is ultimate and perfect, breathing a hope of inward transformation as an earthly reflection of what is the Kingdom of Heaven.⁵⁰

As a result of this emancipation from the Christian faith and hope in eternal life, we have acquired various substitutes for this loss of eternal hope in terms of "premature security" such as the belief in progress⁵¹ and the control over the future through man-made means which will diminish one's dependency in a reality beyond himself. This self-confidence is really a Western typical form of belief in progress.⁵² Such a belief must be labeled as a false substitute for Christian hope at the same time that it is recognized that Christian hope was the original source of this confidence. And as this false hope fails and dies, hopelessness and despair of the nihilistic meaninglessness of life engulf life.

Distinguishing between the rationalist belief in progress and the Christian hope in progress, Brunner says that first, rationalist faith in progress is based on confidence in human reason while Christian faith in progress is based on the certainty of God, reflected in Jesus as the gift of grace, the church in the world, and the new life, which is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Second, the

⁴⁹Brunner, Eternal Hope, pp. 12-13.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 69.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 92.

⁵²Ibid., p. 9 f.

rationalist hope believes in the illusion that the development of reason, automatically guarantees an increase in material well-being. On the other hand, the Christian hope in progress is from faith that the Holy Spirit is in control of the heart of personal life, bringing about moral and spiritual change. Third, the Christian hope is not built on addition and increase but rather the growth of the new comes through the repeated destruction of the old. So one dies in Christ to live. Finally, Brunner acknowledges the common factor between the two forms of hope or belief in progress in man as "an instrument and co-worker with the grace of God . . . in so far as this latter wills to be and is nothing other than an instrument of the action of God." In this sense man is the tool of God and not the real author of progress.⁵³

In chapter ten of Eternal Hope, Brunner asks the question on a practical level as to what man really loses when he loses the Christian hope of eternal life. For him there are at least four major areas of loss: (1) With the panic fear of the end and a lack of inner peace, man turns to technics as a future which he can control, in his escape from hopelessness. So "He not only organizes men outwardly into a completely controllable collectivist state but he organizes also the conversion of men to the required collectivist-technocratic-totalitarian mode of thought and surrender of judgment."⁵⁴ At this point, Brunner notes wisely the similarity which exists between communism and the democratic West.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 71-72.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 79.

(2) With the loss of hope, a philosophy of despair or nihilism follows in which a reciprocal loss of personality is the result. Doomed only to death which is the destruction of personality, man becomes with Heidegger a being unto death. With no sense of purpose or meaning for life a man gets caught up in the current paradox of work where work-fanaticism and work-idolatry are part of a current scene in which there is an equal lack of the will to work and a desire for leisure. In his volume Christianity and Civilisation, Brunner suggests that leisure is fast becoming as serious a problem as work is for man in his search for meaning.⁵⁵

(3) A third result of the loss of Christian hope is in the concealment of death. Substituted for the loss of death are various philosophies such as the cycle of recurrence, timelessness and immortality, all in an attempt to reverse the innocuous situation.

(4) "The absolute valuation of natural vitality, the brutal justification and operation of the will to power." With the removal of metaphysical foundations of personality, there is a direct preparation for totalitarianism. Communism is but one example of this totalitarianism.

In his volume Christianity and Civilisation, Brunner explores the motives for work.⁵⁶ Why does a man work? He acknowledges the egoistic motives such as necessity and the obligation of self-respect.

⁵⁵Emil Brunner, Christianity and Civilisation (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), pp. 70-71.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 57 f.

But then he affirms that the reasons for work are ultimately religious. A basic religious affirmation or motive for work is to be found in God's creation, which considers at one and the same time man's basic spiritual-body unity, and his personhood held in community with God and man. Now the sovereign God of creation is also the same sovereign God of Redemption, who is guided by the law of love. The love of Christ is the motive but not the rule for action, Brunner says at another place. The principle implied is "appropriate action out of love."⁵⁷ So work is meant to be the service of God and of the community and thus the expression of his dignity as a man. Herein is our divine calling, our vocation, as the valuation of work is shifted from what a man does to why and how he does what he does.

III. EMIL BRUNNER AS A RESOURCE FOR PREACHING THE RESURRECTION

Two sermons in the series "God's Victory and Ours" were used to reflect the influence of Emil Brunner's understanding of the resurrection and its implications for the ethical life, particularly at work. The first of these sermons with the title "Life is Meeting" deals with the resurrection in Brunner in terms of truth as encounter, or meeting. One of man's greatest areas of disappointment and of happiness is in the area of what happens to him in his relationships with others. Among the others with whom man relates or fails to relate is God. It is the area of life whose understanding has been aided by the "I-Thou"

⁵⁷ Kegley, op. cit., p. 349.

concept of the late Martin Buber, who also influenced Brunner.

The success of our meeting brings life. Its failure brings death. The life or death quality of our meetings is symbolized by the presence or the absence of love as the quality of the meeting. And when life's relationship ministers nothing of eternal hope, man in his despair panics in search of other sources of more immediate hope. Both work-fanaticism and the belief in inevitable progress are symptoms of this flight of man in search of a valid center of hopefulness before life and death.

As a result of a more valid experience of meeting with their Resurrected Master on the Emmaus Road, the disciples return to life with a new hopefulness about themselves and life's meaning. Here they encountered God's love and forgiveness which transformed their lives. Such a transformed life is authentic, open, disciplined, hopeful, and responsive because of the resurrection and its victory in his life.

(Cf. Appendix)

The second sermon "Religion on the Run" was meant to capture the thrust of the missionary theology of Brunner as it is motivated by the resurrection of Jesus. This sermon recognizes that for man "religion on the run" means religion in retreat, having no hope in itself or beyond itself. Furthermore, religion in retreat has no real sense of the enemy in sin and death. For us today, those words are archaic, vestigial ornaments of an irrelevant faith.

The writer of the letter to the Ephesians suggests that "We who in Christ have first hope have been destined and appointed to live for

the praise of his glory." Hope provides the central aim and motive for life, is the first thought suggested by this text. Now knowledge is a part of this hope. The knowledge indicated is not a philosopher's knowledge of objective truth nor the subjective knowledge of the existentialist. The knowledge indicated is the knowledge which comes through personal encounter with the living God.

What is the nature of the knowledge which comes from such an encounter with the living God who gives to man a living hope? First we know the call of God to love in fulfillment of our full humanity. Second, we know the gift of God, His inheritance given to us even now as a foretaste of that coming kingdom. In the light of this inheritance, my life takes on a new value. Finally, the knowledge gained in the encounter is the knowledge of the sovereign power of God which enables us to achieve fulfillment in life, gives energy, which is power in action, and subdues and disciplines our powers. Such a power redeems, creates and restores life. This is the same power of God which brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ.

The New Testament is a book of power which set men running to the praise of God with a mission in life for life. Any why not now? Why not you? These are some of the ways in which Brunner's concept of "truth as encounter" and "a missionary theology" as they reveal the power of the resurrection and the Christian hope can serve as resource for the stimulation of the preacher who seeks to preach the resurrection of Jesus with its ethical implications for man and his work as well as for all aspects of his life.

PART THREE: THE FIELD OF WORK

CHAPTER V

SOME ISSUES TO BE FACED IN THE FIELD OF WORK

One cannot live in the twentieth century without a feeling of a tremendous movement and change taking place. A whole new vocabulary is developing in the field of work which includes such words as technique, technology, automation, and cybernetics. And with these changes, which on the surface have caused man to bow before the altar of this new and unknown god, there is a whole new series of problems arising. In an introductory fashion this chapter will seek to deal with a definition and several of the issues arising in this age of automation. Consider in this order: first, the definition of the age of automation or the technological age; second, the organization man; third, on-the-job ethics; fourth, incentives for working; and, five, to play or not to play, the leisure revolution.

I. THE TECHNOLOGICAL AGE

"Ernst Jünger once wrote that technology is the real metaphysics of the twentieth century."¹ Indeed, technology has tended to become a god - the religious object which our society increasingly and uncritically worships. Such worship leads in turn to a change in value system in which man becomes one among many integrated components. In such a society, man becomes a means to an end. Indeed, the technological society majors in the improvement of the means with little

¹Jacques Ellul, The Technological Society (New York: Knopf, 1965), p. ix.

consideration of the ultimate ends. Any component in this society is valued in the light of its contribution in achieving something else.

"Know-how" has an ultimate value.²

One of the seminal works of this day under discussion because of its stimulating insights is Jacques Ellul's The Technological Society. In a "Note to the Reader," Ellul makes an attempt to define technique, as he uses the word. He writes

The term technique, as I use it, does not mean machines, technology, or this or that procedure for attaining an end. In our technological society, technique is the totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency (for a given stage of development) in every field of human activity. Its characteristics are new; the technique of the present has no common measure with that of the past.³

Ellul's volume seeks to explore the facets of this technique as a sociological phenomenon affecting every factor of the life of modern man. His personal motivations are Christian.

To further define some of the new vocabulary, Walter Buckingham who is Director of the School of Industrial Management and Professor of Economics at Georgia Institute of Technology provides some historical development insights which help to define the vocabulary of our day in his book Automation. For him technology is science applied in a concern for practical uses.⁴ Automation is the third phase in the development of technology that began with the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century. The first phase was the mechanization which

²Ibid., p. vi.

³Ibid., p. xxv.

⁴Walter Buckingham, Automation (New York: New American Library, 1961), pp. 11-12.

created the factory system and the concerns of labor and management. The second phase was the mass production principle of the early twentieth century with the assembly line and machinery so expensive that ownership of industry finally had to be divorced from management. Since World War II automation is the added element of automatic control and decision making which integrates the operation with the end of mass production.

. . . Mechanization was technology based on forms and applications of power. Mass production was technology based on principles of production organization. Automation is a technology based on communication and control.⁵

The technological society has gone one step further with a new definition of work as cybernation. Harvey Cox in The Secular City describes cybernation as a combination of automation as the mechanical operation of the production machines and cybernetics as the science of control and feedback systems such as in electronic computers.

"Cybernation means the hitching of the computer to the machine. It reduces the human role to programming the task and maintaining the equipment."⁶

Why do government and industry turn to cybernated systems to solve their problems? There are several reasons. One of the major reasons is that the cybernated organization has discovered that there are financial advantages to using machines over people. Second, by

⁵ Ibid., p. 14.

⁶ Harvey Cox, The Secular City (New York, Macmillan, 1965), p. 184.

reducing personnel an organization reduces the personnel problems with which management has to cope. Third, the computer permits management to rationalize its activities through up-to-date information needed to do its job. Fourth, control and coordination through the computer permits the organization greater freedom in the location of its plants in relation to raw materials. Fifth, cybernation is a necessity in coping with the rapid rate of growth in our society.⁷

Of course cybernation is not without its problems. The Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara has listed some of these problems in terms of employment and unemployment, additional leisure, and, decisions and public opinion.⁸

Involved in the process of automation is the fact that production's major problem is no longer so much in increasing production as in distributing what is produced. So man is now faced with the delicately basic question as to his role when he is not dependent upon his own activities for the material basis of life. That a man can become surplus or excess either as a producer or a consumer is a threatening cloud on the horizon of life. As a result the traditional link between a man's job and his income is broken.

A further area of fragmentation is in the separation of the worker and his work. Vast residential, suburban areas house the worker who commutes daily to his work in the vast technopolis. The

⁷ Donald N. Michael, Cybernation: The Silent Conquest (Santa Barbara: Fund for the Republic, 1962), pp. 10-14.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 14-39.

family as a consumer and a production unit is now fragmented. The fragmentation is further developed in an automated society in that the worker is separated from his product. There is little worker involvement with the product or work he completes. Indeed the product of many of our workers is an alien object.

In a pamphlet entitled The Triple Revolution, there is listed a series of proposals for action. Central to the action involved is the belief that concern which was once centered in the productive process must now be directed to the welfare of people. The article suggests that

Society as a whole must encourage new modes of constructive, rewarding and ennobling activity. Principal among these are activities such as teaching and learning⁹ that relate people to people rather than people to things. . .

Continuing, the article suggests a transition program which will include a massive build-up of education, massive public works, low-cost housing, rapid transit systems, a public power system, the rehabilitation of obsolete military bases for community educational use, revision of the tax structure, the role of the trade unions and the use of the licensing power of the government to regulate the speed and direction of cybernation to minimize hardship. These are but a beginning list whose existence will depend upon a public philosophy which develops the conviction "that our economic, social and political institutions exist for the use of man and that man does

⁹"The Triple Revolution," Published by Advertising Age Magazine, 1964, 10.

not exist to maintain a particular economic system. . ."¹⁰

At this point, what is the issue as far as human existence is concerned? The first issue is in the fragmentation of life. As mentioned in the opening chapter, life is divided into relationships associated with one's residential life, one's work life, one's leisure time life and one's public or community life. Within each of these areas or sectors of one's existence are still an even greater number of fragments which frustrate the individual.

The concern then is for wholeness. Worship and the resurrection express the symbolic unity or relatedness of all things. Here is an expression of relationship with the whole of existence. Here is the reconciliation of our separateness, the celebration of our real communion community. The resurrection focus is a focusing on the pursuit of the wholeness of life seen in the unity of life in Jesus Christ. Here the brokenness of human existence finds its life. Life was not meant to be this way. And, when the brokenness does exist, the resurrection through the worship contemplation reveals the wholeness of life in God.

II. THE ORGANIZATION MAN

In a real sense "the organization man" is the result of the application of the technique of Jacques Ellul to man and his relationships. Caught up in the problem is the relationship between the

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 10-12.

individual and his society. Almost a decade ago, in 1957, William H. Whyte, Jr. wrote a book The Organization Man which attempted to report the dilemma. Even a casual reading of the introduction of this book gives one some sense of the scope of the problem.

The organization is not just something a man works for but something to which he belongs. The organization is an institution. One makes a commitment to the collectivized goals of that institution. And, there is a strange similarity between the trainee at DuPont and the young seminarian, between the young engineer at Lockheed and the young apprentice in a Wall Street law firm. All are preoccupied with the common problems which arise as a result of their collective existence. While they may talk about the "treadmill" or the "rat race," they seem to have no great sense of being unable to control their own direction. What the organization wants is for the best. So they are caught in their search for a corporate utopia, somewhere between a collective fatalism and religious trust in the organization to provide all things necessary. One of the most neglected areas of concern is at the point of what this new fealty does to the individual as a person.

To a great degree the organization man still believes that he lives by the Protestant Ethic as he pursues the American Dream of individual salvation through hard work, thrift and competitive struggle. The truth of the matter is not to be found here. Our real advance has been founded for years now on cooperative action not on personal freedom and independence, and this in spite of the fact that we still use the language of individualism to describe what we think

is taking place.

What then is modern man's great need caught between individualism of the frontier and the organization of the Great Society? Mr. Whyte suggests that

. . . The organization man seeks a redefinition of his place on earth - a faith that will satisfy him that what must endure has a deeper meaning than appears on the surface. He needs, in short, something that will do for him what the Protestant Ethic did once. And slowly, almost imperceptibly, a body of thought has been coalescing that does that.¹¹

Whyte describes this new moral imperative in terms of a Social Ethic. This Social Ethic with its morally legitimate pressures has three propositions: "a belief in the group as the source of creativity; a belief in 'belongingness' as the ultimate need of the individual; and a belief in the application of science to achieve the belongingness."¹²

In essence, man is a lonely, isolated creature. But as he cooperates with other human beings in common, collective goals, he discovers his real power - the power of corporate action and creativity. There need be no conflict between man as an individual and as a member of the group. When such conflicts do occur they are a result of misunderstanding or a failure in communication which the science of human relations can correct in bringing us to a proper consensus. Such an attitude towards life is a kind of utopian faith

¹¹ William H. Whyte, Jr., The Organization Man (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1957), p. 6.

¹² Ibid., p. 7.

in which there is a long-range hope which relates daily techniques to its achievement. Man's daily contribution is something that he can do here and now to see that that hope is realized. If one wishes to taste the first fruits of this coming kingdom and to see in laboratory closeness its effects, he has only to take up residence in one of our suburban residential dormitories for transient organization men and their families, who follow them like the Indian villages of another day from one hunting ground to another. Then the game pursued was buffalo. Today the game is often in terms of changing government contracts.

Mr. Whyte believes that the man who made the organization is the man who will have to change it. Indeed this is the man who can change it. The organization is not a historical determinism but the product of man. Moreover

The fault is not in organization, in short; it is in our worship of it. It is in our vain quest for a utopian equilibrium, which would be horrible if it ever did come to pass; it is in the soft-minded denial that there is a conflict between the individual and society. There must always be, and it is the price of being an individual that he must face these conflicts. He cannot evade them, and in seeking an ethic that offers a spurious peace of mind, thus does he tyrannize himself.¹³

One of the central problems of the organization man, whether he be a cog in the wheel of industry or in a great banking corporation, is his sense of loss of identity, with its resultant anxiety. The previous section of this chapter has indicated the fragmentation which results from the automation of our society with the worker being

¹³Ibid., pp. 13-14.

separated from the product. In the process the human factor with its interest and satisfaction disappears.

The dehumanization is further carried forward by the machine-like pressures of the increased tempo of production, again similar for the man on the machine line or in the large corporation production line. In a sense the ancient slavery of repetitious action is now evident in refined form, dressed not so much in rags as in a button down collar. A man's worth is in terms of his function within the organization's demands for mechanistic perfection and uniformity. Emotional rapport, intuitive insights, flexible variation, alert discrimination, original possibilities all fade away.¹⁴

It is reported that some large manufacturers like Ford and Westinghouse periodically change assembly line assignments of their workers with no seeming loss of efficiency and with actual gains in worker enthusiasm. So there are some possibilities by which worker efficiency can be maintained and the drab monotony of repetitious work reduced. But human engineering can become as much of a problem as job engineering. "If job responsibilities are engineered to a point where little creativeness is necessary and human engineering is compounded with mechanical engineering, then the plight of the worker may be multiplied rather than relieved."¹⁵

¹⁴ Samuel H. Miller, "Worship and Work in the Industrial Age," Pastoral Psychology, XI:102 (March 1960), 25.

¹⁵ Carl F. H. Henry, Aspects of Christian Social Ethics (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), p. 59.

Eric Fromm, a famous psychologist, comes at the identity and anxiety problem from his perspective in a discerning article "Our Way of Life Makes Us Miserable." Dr. Fromm believes that anxiety comes not because a man fears loss of employment alone but because he is unable to find any real satisfaction or interest in life.

They live and die without ever having confronted the fundamental realities of human existence as emotionally and intellectually productive, authentic and independent human beings. . . . The man whose life is centered around producing, selling and consuming commodities transforms himself into a commodity. He becomes increasingly attracted to that which is man-made and mechanical, rather than to that which is natural and organic.¹⁶

Dr. Fromm's solution does not lie in a return to an earlier stage of preindustrial mode of production. He suggests rather a transformation of the system from a bureaucratically managed industrialism in which production and consumption are the ends (both here and in Russia) into a humanist industrialism "in which man and the full development of his potentialities - those of love and of reason - are the aims of all social arrangements. Production and consumption should serve only as means to this end, and should be prevented from ruling man."¹⁷

Harvey Cox, in The Secular City sees the bureaucratic organization of work in a different light than Fromm. He views the organization as functional improvement over the guild or family business. But,

¹⁶ Erich Fromm, "Our Way of Life Makes Us Miserable," Saturday Evening Post, CCXXXVII (July 25, 1965), 10.

¹⁷ Ibid.

with Fromm he believes that the major issue is "how we can harness organizational power for authentic human purposes."¹⁸ The issue is how to make vast power structures of the organization man answerable to the population. Until we can do this, we shall not be in a position to humanize the organizational world. To discover where the power lies may point to the mechanism which is to be steered in the direction of the human community.

In understanding the organization, Cox suggests that we must first understand the "order" or integrative principle which it replaced in Western society.¹⁹ In the "order" there was a traditional, ethnic or sacred basis which related a person to a mythical past, a total way of life with a secure identity. This "order" is associated with the Greek polis, the primitive tribe or town society. In contrast with the "order," the organization is flexible, future-oriented, secularized and limited in its scope, offering many possibilities for choice and creativity.

To develop the understanding of these characteristics of the organization, consider first, that the organization is flexible in that its basic construction is changing in the light of its accomplishment of specific purposes. Tradition is never first nor determinative as in the "order." Second, the organization's future-orientation is a result of seeking to achieve particular ends or goals. Past experience is organized to solve future problems. Third, the organization is secularized in that religious taboos are taboo as

¹⁸Cox, op. cit., p. 173.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 175 ff.

technical procedures are continually evaluated and refined. In this sense "nothing is sacred." Fourth, the organization places only a limited claim upon its members to the extent that the individual makes a contribution to the purposes of the organization.

These characteristics of the organization are important because of what they say about the role of the individual and the institutional organization's role in his life. While on the one hand, it would appear that the individual is the servant of the institution, it is also true on the other hand that the institution leaves him the terrible freedom to choose his own companions and style of life or identity. It does not seek to impose on him a total identity or life-meaning. This is admittedly a narrow freedom and the lines are not always kept because the organization may overstep its limitations or the individual may flee from freedom and take his total identity and style of life from the organization. Indeed the problem is acute just from the amount of time that the organization demands of the organization man in the narrow usage of the term. If the shortening of hours for the man in the trades or industry is true, then his problem of identity and anxiety fall into different patterns.

Having observed the characteristics of the organization, the question of the use of power and to what ends still remains. Involved at this point is not just the production of the goods which will relieve hunger, disease and misery but also the proper distribution of those goods. The organization is still struggling to know what to do with all that it produces and with no greater contribution to

suggest than that we should all consume more. Furthermore, the organization becomes locked not just in a power struggle with society but with a power struggle within itself between the new technological intellectual and the old style business baron. Democratic decision-making is both desirable and essential as a characteristic of the organization. Here is the revolutionary demand of our age to make the fruits of production available to all people without subverting their political and cultural freedom.

Cox seems to point the way in a stance that offers real identity and at the same time the creative kind of anxiety in his discussion of the recognition and the responsible use of power as being crucial for the organization man. He writes

. . . The frequent question 'How can I preserve my own individual values in a giant organization?' may be falsely put. From the biblical perspective, the first question is never 'how can I save my own soul, skin, values, or personality?' Man is summoned to be concerned, first of all, for his neighbor. In the age of organization he can only do this by getting into the fray, by losing a little skin from his own nose, perhaps even a spiritual value here and there, in the tough but epochal battle for the control of the organization. But as he does leap in, perhaps at the risk of his own life, he may discover that, even in the age of organization, precisely he who loses his life gains it.²⁰

In the consideration of the organization man, depersonalized and in anxious search for identity, the relationship of the individual and society and the proper use of power for proper ends is at stake. The focus on the resurrection of Jesus offers an understanding of power and the goals for which it is used by God in redemption of man.

²⁰Ibid., p. 181.

Also implicit in the resurrection of Jesus is the forgiveness and fellowship of the Church where individual and social relationships ideally offer a creative balance between the two poles of individual and organization.

Douglas Steere tells of being taken to the University Museum in Seattle by the artist Mohlzahn to see a painting of his which he calls The Eclipse of Man. In the painting the great wheels of industry, skyscrapers, canon and factory chimneys converge on the crushed and prostrate body of man.²¹ Steere goes on later to ask what it would mean to undertake a prophetic sequel which might bear the title "The Resurrection of Modern Man in His Work." Certainly the task of the preacher is in prophetically pointing man to the reality of resurrection for his life, even in his work as a component within the organization man.

III. ON-THE-JOB ETHICS

With the rise of scandals in government and business a series of books and articles began to appear emphasizing the ethical dimension of business conduct. (The bibliography lists some of these works.) One of the largest questionnaire surveys was printed in the Harvard Business Review, in July-August of 1961. The general consensus of the articles was that the average businessman was quite aware that in his industry there were practices which were prevalent and

²¹ Douglas V. Steere, Work and Contemplation (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), p. 58 ff.

unethical. The Together magazine in its July 1965 midmonth powwow presented a group of five prominent Pittsburgh laymen from various professions in a discussion of "Making Christian Decisions . . . on the Job." Their discussion ranged not only the area of decision-making but also the relationship of Christian principles to daily life and work. Basic to their questioning was the compatibility of Christian ethics and good business practices.

More recently the Department of the Church and Economic Life of the National Council of Churches has sponsored a special pilot project which they called "On-the-Job Ethics." In the project lay groups were organized in six cities of men of a specific professional orientation: banking (Chicago), building contracting (Detroit), business management (Toronto), labor union work (New Jersey), personnel administration (Hartford), and public relations (New York City). The only church leader present was a convenor who called the group together. The goal of the pilot project was to evaluate the merits of the small group process in lay occupational groups in bringing about a higher level of personal integrity and social responsibility in our national life. One can see the similarity of such a project to the evangelical lay academies of Europe dealt with in an earlier chapter. The basic difference between the two groups is in the environment in which they originated. In Europe, the lay group movement arose in the terrible vacuum following the fall of Hitler in Germany while in America no such traumatic experience serves as a motivation.

The original study had two purposes. The first had to do with

content in that the group was "'to probe in depth, from the perspective of the Christian faith and its principles, the nature of today's work as revealed in searching ethical issues which are involved in the decision-making process in certain lay-occupations.'" The second purpose has to do with method in that the project seeks "'to discover if and how lay people can be involved over a substantial period of time in a serious consideration of their ethical responsibilities in their occupations.'"²²

The operation of the group would be based on such principles of continuity, permissiveness, acceptance of the following main lines of approach:

1. Identification of concrete situations in a group's occupation which are vital and difficult for the exercise of a sense of ethical responsibility.
2. Analysis of the reason and source for a specific situation being described as 'vital and difficult' from the perspective of an ethical concern.
3. Identification and evaluation of ways by which people deal with those ethical issues in the decision-making process.
4. Analysis of the resources - personal, professional, religious - available to ethically concerned people in daily work.
5. Suggestions of ways by which the churches can help lay people help themselves to more effective responsibility as Christians in the world of work.²³

A summary of the concerns expressed by the group would make the area of on-the-job ethics more specific. For bankers the concerns were for personal situations, for differences in philosophical orientation rather than practical judgments, a desire to discuss fundamental

²²Cameron P. Hall (ed.), On-the-Job Ethics (New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., 1963), p. 130.

²³Ibid., pp. 137-38.

faith and personal motivation, more interest in earnings than in the quality of the product, a confusion between good principles and Christian principles, and the need for forgiveness before pressures and failures. For the building contractors the concerns were in terms of headaches in human, inter-personal relationships, the sense of being caught between the ideal integrity and cynicism, the tension between integrity and what is possible and necessary, the demand to make money as a valid goal of the businessman, and the need to hear the crucial word of the gracious act of God in which light they can renew and reorder their lives.

The business executives expressed concern in areas such as decision-making, employee-employer relationships, the impersonal aspects of corporate life, the need for commitment to God in the face of risks, the automatic quality of so much decision-making, and the need for assurance when you are right. The labor unionist group questioned goals in the light of the lordship of Christ with a sense of the world under new management and the demand for obedience.

In their group, the personnel managers expressed concern over the risks involved in their job, the pressure of decisions for the sake of expediency on the company's behalf, the problem of professionalism, organizational pressures, the limits of manipulation and the complexity of ethical decisions in which there is no perfect answer. The last group of public relations consultants viewed their concerns in terms of the role of the public relations man with his client, the problem of truth and flexibility in telling it, and the

question of personal integrity in such areas as that of rebates and the relationship with clients.

In reflecting on this project, certain similarities are seen between the "on-the-job ethics" project and the lay academy movement.²⁴ First, there is merit in accenting lay leadership from the beginning. Second, the different project groups were very much aware of the lack of trained personnel - both lay and clergy - who were equipped to deal with this kind of work in depth. Third, there is a greater degree of specialization in the various vocational communities than is generally supposed. Fourth, the men who participated in the pilot project saw their chief difficulties in the area of interpersonal relationships.

The convenors of the pilot project groups listed two sets of values which are reflective of the problem areas of on-the-job ethics. The first set of values is for the churches and the clergy in that it helps them to understand what questions are being asked, how to participate as a resource person, and to discover just how complex the questions are in the "gray areas" in the working out of such absolutes as justice, integrity, compassion and similar virtues. The churches and clergy are thus faced with helping to equip the layman with the inner resources to be responsible for the "gray areas" of existence in the field of work.

For the layman, the occupational groups provided a sense of

²⁴Ibid., cf. pp. 123-31.

belonging together in an area of mutual concern. The groups helped to keep the tensions between what is and what ought to be. The group provided the environment where the layman could consider intimately the ethical climate of his work better than he could otherwise do on the job. Such groups helped to widen the perceptual screen of the participants, breaking the distortions of cliches and outmoded slogans. The groups opened the possibility for a change of motivation and direction with a change in practices. The very process itself provided a sense of adventure and discovery as laymen discovered that the factors of life have theological presuppositions.²⁵

The author of this thesis in a project with a mixed group of men and women from many professional backgrounds presented a similar grid of questions as an illustration of how one could work out the issue of on-the-job ethics in the local church. The group considered the following as ethical concerns which were problematical for them: social drinking and company entertainment, witnessing in the face of superiority feelings, the pressure of social conformity, dealing with retirement, witnessing in answer to religious questions, the care of property, concern for people beyond the mechanics of the job, honesty in the face of competition, open housing, personal conduct and relationships, the right plan or policy for the benefit of the customer, personal integrity and honesty, fulfillment of the service in the light of needs and demands, dealing with the unchurched at work.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 139-40.

One of the real dangers of the churchman or clergyman is to think that he has the corner on the market of ethical concern. The author received from a layman enrolled at a nearby university a reading list for a course in which he was enrolled with the title "Social Responsibilities of the Businessman." The reading list or bibliography contained sixteen pages of books and articles relating to the course. The forward to the reading list indicates the wide ethical concern of the course.

The purpose of this list is to provide the student with means to understanding the environment in which business functions and the implications of the businessman's decisions for society.

The list moves from history to philosophy to business ethics to business philosophy, and there are a number of subdivisions: capitalism vs. socialism, reform and locus of power; the philosophical, religious, and social ethics, religion and the rise of capitalism, and social psychology; business ethics, profit, conflict of interest, price-fixing, fraud, theft, antitrust activity, and government agencies and control of legislation; philosophy of management, codes and value perspectives, the businessman in politics, responsibility to stockholders, employees (including the organization man), industry, and the community including, of course, the consumer.²⁶

Such a list if taken seriously would cause the preacher who has any idea of being specific in ethical concerns to listen longer, read more, and talk less. The text for the course Issues in Business and Society edited by William T. Greenwood has case studies from nineteen categories, two-thirds of which have "pro" and "con" statements since they are controversial. The remaining third of the articles considers new trends. Most of the articles have been published since 1958,

²⁶From an unpublished course bibliography on Social Responsibilities of the Businessman.

selected from a publication list of over four hundred such articles.

It would be completely unfair to act as if the church has had no concern at the point of ethical concerns relating to work. Unfortunately these concerns are too often carried through the social action arms of the church which do not always touch either the busy local pastor or the man in the pew. One such illustration of this work is Childs and Cater's penetrating analysis of the application of Christian ethics in relation to economic goals in an attempt to reconcile the realities of life with ethical aspirations, with the title Ethics in a Business Society, published in 1954 as the aftermath of a significant study running into a series of six volumes in this field.

To consider the focus of the resurrection of Jesus as a preaching resource to the field of work at the point of on-the-job ethics takes one at least into the area of justice and grace. One of the finer attempts to draw out the implications of the resurrection in terms of justice is Barth and Fletcher's recent volume Acquittal by Resurrection. While the problem treated there is more in the area of politics, the model of focus and field is a workable demonstration of the dialogue to be carried on between faith and practice, between theology and ethics and can be transferred to the resurrection focus and the work field with helpfulness and suggestiveness.

IV. INCENTIVES FOR WORKING

There is a current note in much writing that indicates a shifting of the incentives for a man's working. Whyte in The Organization Man describes this changing pattern of incentives in terms of "the decline of the protestant ethic."²⁷ Cox in The Secular City describes the change in terms of "the emancipation of work from religion."²⁸ With the secularization of life in general, the religious sanctions attached to work as incentives also are in question.

The relation of religion to a man's work gave work an aura of religious devotion. In some strange way a man's job had sacred value. So by his work, a man gains access to the things of the kingdom here and now in terms of goods and products of society. As a result every man must have a job as his ticket to material salvation. So he seeks to work out his salvation through the job. A man's job is filled with meanings that color life. Worship of the job becomes a substitute idolatry for the worship of God for God's sake. At the same time, work is drudgery when it might be a pleasure.

With the automation of our life with cybernetics, there are fewer jobs to be shared around. There are more and more jobs which require more and more skills and training. But it is believed that enough goods can be produced to deliver everyone from the fear of poverty and deprivation. Such a situation demands a divorce from

²⁷Whyte, op. cit., pp. 16 ff.

²⁸Cox, op. cit., pp. 182 ff.

the mistaken religious dimension which links consumer and producer. So the man who has been told that he would live by the sweat of his brow faces the necessity of redefining the nature of work. He is faced with asking if it is possible to transform work from drudgery to a delight. Is it possible that creative activity may be done because of the pleasure of achievement and the drives of accomplishment rather than because one has to work in order to eat? If work could be delivered from false religion, it would no longer be identified with the job but would become a means for the humanization of man and society.

The question of full employment merely to guarantee one's meal ticket through the requirements of the labor market is now transferred to work done as self-expression, achievement and cooperation to vast areas in society in education, conservation and social work. The problem now is dealt with as primarily a fully human problem rather than economic. And just because most people want to work, work would be done as a social reality for its own joy, in terms of what it takes to make a man human. Employment would be in terms of what is worthwhile and in terms of what it contributes to society.²⁹

Closely related to this redefinition of work is our misunderstanding of the Protestant doctrine of vocation in which we believe that God calls men to different vocations or trades. Alan Richardson clarifies the issue when he writes that

²⁹Ibid., p. 187.

The New Testament does not refer to 'vocation' in the modern sense of a secular 'profession' or 'avocation'. In the New Testament 'vocation' (klesis, 'calling') means God's call to repentance and faith and to a life of fellowship and service in the Church. The Bible knows no instance of a man's being called to an earthly profession or trade by God. St. Paul, for example, is called by God to be an apostle; he is not 'called' to be a tent-maker. It is hardly too much to say that the Bible is uninterested in the various professions and occupations in which men engage for the sake of earning a livelihood, provided that they are honest; . . .³⁰

Thus our secular vocations are delivered from becoming ends which we idolize and serve in false idolatry. They are rather means by which we serve the Kingdom of God.

Returning to Cox's argument for a society in which work is not linked to the production-consumer relationship, one still must face the fact that for many people, work provides the central meaning of life. Many people find their identity and significance in their work. Here is the real meaning of a man's life. A guaranteed annual income does not take into consideration a man's need to work for a life that is meaningful. As long as it is understood that a man needs to make a meaningful contribution to society we shall avoid the corrupting influence of prosperity, or better still to enjoy it with gratitude for the gift.

Basic to the question is the matter of incentives provided by working. Through what a man receives there is in addition to the wage a psychological and moral value. The payment helps to bind men together or to recognize the ties which they have as fellow human

³⁰ Alan Richardson, The Biblical Doctrine of Work (london: SCM Press, 1963), p. 33.

beings. The economic incentive provides a discipline and a seriousness for life. In the long run, the basic question is in terms of what a man's wage means.

The fact of the matter is that for most workers the financial incentive is still operative. The sly saying "If money is not everything, it surely beats whatever is in second place" is still in vogue. The worker is involved in job-evaluation systems, merit increases and incentive-pay wage plans. Production is not only in terms of quantity but also quality and the rewards lie at the heart of the incentive. Aspiration is in terms of money, job security, responsibility, initiative, authority and prestige.

Levenstein in Why People Work gives a simplified composite list of how job satisfaction factors were ranked by employees in sixteen separate studies in these rankings:

1. Security
2. Interest (intrinsic aspects of the job)
3. Opportunity for advancement
4. Appreciation (from the supervisor)
5. Company and management
6. Wages
7. Supervision
8. Social aspects of the job
9. Working conditions (excluding hours)
10. Communication
11. Hours
12. Ease
13. Benefits³¹

Closely related to this list is a word from Jules Henry in Culture Against Man where he suggests that

³¹Aaron Levenstein, Why People Work (New York: Collier, 1964), pp. 283-86.

Except for professionals and executives most Americans are emotionally involved neither in their occupation (what they do) nor in their job (the place where they do it). What finally relates the average person to life, space, and people is his own personal, intimate economy: his family, house, and car. He has labelled his occupational world 'not involved', and turned inward upon his own little world of family, hobbies, and living standard.³²

Add to this image of the incentives for the motives behind a man's work the fear that drives him and the picture is further complicated. The fear behind the technological drivenness of our time is in competition, failure, loss of markets, of humiliation, of becoming obsolete or surplus and beyond all these fears, the fear of communism which keeps the aircraft and space industries driving ahead at the same time we give away billions to feed the hungry peoples of the world, in the guise of the very reluctant Samaritan.

It is at this point that the doctrine of the resurrection offers man at work a focus for bringing meaning to work within the total context of a meaningful life and which calls man to a high faith of radical obedience. This obedience is in terms of being called out into the world in service to God and the community. Herein is man's real dignity and resurrection rather than using work as a fanatic escape in proportion to the poverty of his soul. The corrected understanding of vocation and its implications for the man in the face of his work is basic here. Also, the belief in the lordship of the resurrected Christ over all the creation sets the focus for a man

³²Jules Henry, Culture Against Man (New York: Random House, 1963), p. 29.

caught in the field of work as he tries to clarify his incentives for work.

V. TO PLAY OR NOT TO PLAY - THE LEISURE REVOLUTION

Isn't it strange that something such as leisure which seems to be the goal of life for so many is at the same time referred to by an economist as a "threat,"³³ by someone in social ethics as an "escape"³⁴ and by a theologian such as Brunner as a "problem"?³⁵

The economist seems to view the threat of leisure as the cutting back of work time. It is quite true that in the United States industry has dropped from 84 hours a week in 1800 to 60 hours in 1900 and is somewhere less than 40 hours today. The predictions today are by some for a four day work week and by others for a seven-hour work day.³⁶

The writer in social ethics sees man grabbing at leisure as an 'off the job' escape through which a man hurries in constant flight. Here is a man fleeing from the emptiness of work through his meals, leisure, and even through his sleep. This is the man in search for meaning for life. "But leisure is impotent to compensate for the forfeiture of worship and the meaninglessness of work. . . When a man loses the sacred significance of work and of himself as worker, he

³³ Buckingham, op. cit., p. 150. ³⁴ Henry, J., op. cit., p. 33.

³⁵ Emil Brunner, Christianity and Civilisation (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 71.

³⁶ Budkingham, op. cit., pp. 150-51.

soon loses the sacred meaning of time and of life.³⁷

The theologian sees man who has lost the divine perspective throwing himself either into his work as a work-fanatic or fleeing into leisure. He believes that "the desire for quiet and true recreation comes from the awareness of a higher destiny." God requires that we both work and rest. Because a man's leisure as well as his work can be emptied of meaning, it is entirely possible that leisure will become one of man's major problems in the near future. A life grounded in God has the possibility of discovering the right rhythm of work and leisure.³⁸

Basic to the problem of leisure is that there is such a mixture of definitions. Leisure for many people is commonly thought of in relation to time - free time, not devoted to the job. Leisure is time off from work. Such a view of leisure fails to get at its deeper meanings. Indeed free time is not necessarily leisure time. Leisure depends upon what the individual will do with the freedom to decide how he will use his time.

Tied closely to the problem is the placing of leisure at the opposite pole from work, in terms of work as being good and play as being the work of the devil. As such leisure is viewed as being unproductive, opposed to work and therefore evil or wrong. So often one returns from a vacation exhausted with the remark that he is going

³⁷Henry, J., op. cit., pp. 150-51.

³⁸Brunner, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

back to work and get rested. There is a basic confusion at this point which is further compounded by a man's sense of guilt at supposedly being unproductive.

In an attempt to clarify the confusion through a changing of the definition, Harvey Cox refers to Robert Theobold's efforts in this direction.³⁹ Basic to the redefinition is an understanding that work is something more than man's "labor-payment" to society. Work is a man's full use of his potential "'for the material benefit of his fellows and for his own self-fulfillment'". With this definition of work, leisure might achieve a more positive one. More than the opposite of work, leisure will become "the full utilization of man's potential for the cultural and psychic benefits of himself and his fellows." With this kind of redefinition, not just of work but of life as man's vocation to joy and gratitude in whatever he is doing, man may come to enjoy leisure in his work and work in his leisure.

A further danger beyond the confusion of leisure with free time, as therefore unproductive and even licentious, is the use of leisure as "a rhetorical tool" which union officials and advertising men use to win arguments of persuasion or sales.⁴⁰ If one traces leisure to its classical rootage, the Greek word for leisure is scole from which we get our word for school. Leisure is thus associated

³⁹Cox, op. cit., p. 188-89.

⁴⁰Sebastian de Grazia, Of Time, Work, and Leisure (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1964), p. 5.

with learning. To trace the word further in the French loisir or the Latin licere, the root meaning is "to be permitted" or "to be free." So the word leisure has the elements of freedom and learning to it. The danger of this line of development is that leisure might be thought to be an outlet for the aristocratic who disdained work or with the intellectual who is involved with the abstract or cultural dimensions of existence. But in a more positive way, leisure is the freedom from everyday necessity wherein a man might learn who he is in the broader meaning of his human existence. In such a definition is involved not just a man's identity but also his destiny. In a man's leisure is his perfection and his future.⁴¹

The report of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions Cybernation: The Silent Conquest suggests that even leisure in transition results in a society of classes, in which our great concern will be "how are all these people to be kept happily occupied in their leisure?"⁴² (The question sounds much like keeping adolescents off the street so that they won't get into trouble.) The concern of the report is not in terms of the utopian ideal sometime in the future but rather in the transition years through which we have now begun to move as a result of cybernation.

Leisure class one is the unemployed. If nothing else the Los Angeles' Watts Riots reminded the country of the large, explosive mass of our population which is unemployed because of low educational

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Michael, op. cit. p. 28.

backgrounds. The main concern of these people is to find work and security. Here is life which is festering away because it is denied creative expression of an unused potential. Douglas Steere refers to this response to the reality of unused potential by saying that "destructiveness is the outcome of unlived life." It is a description which he has borrowed from Erich Fromm's Fear of Freedom.⁴³ Of course retraining in a new job is an alternative to hostile destruction. And, increasingly, such leisure is not just for those lacking in education but also for those who are surplus engineers who are dislocated with the shifting of the aircraft industry. In addition to these two groups is an increasingly large group of women who are seeking to escape from the boredom of routine domestic life due to automated procedures.⁴⁴

Leisure class two includes those who are in "the low-income group working shorter hours."⁴⁵ This group is felt to contribute to the large number of people who work second and third jobs. They are known as "moonlighters." If they cannot find second jobs, their background and attitudes are such that little change is expected in their use of leisure time just because they have neither financial or motivational resources to do differently. Shorter hours will bring serious social problems arising from frustrating relationships in the home and community.

⁴³Steere, op. cit., p. 80.

⁴⁴Michael, op. cit., p. 31.

⁴⁵Ibid.

Leisure class three is that group of people with good or adequate incomes who will be employed for shorter hours. These are the professional or semi-professional workers. They know the value of learning. Possessing knowledge, money and access to leisure-time activities, they will probably use them. They are the ones who can make a contribution to church and community in creative activities.⁴⁶

Leisure class four consists of those who will in all probability experience no further increase in leisure time than they already have. This group includes overworked executives and professionals responsible for the supervision and administration of the cybernetic advances.⁴⁷

In this analysis, class two is where the real problems are or will be. It is to be confessed that we have little knowledge or experience with this group caught in between the unemployed and the relatively well-to-do group. Low-cost leisure activities would be helpful but will not necessarily have the power to transform boredom which could become destructive.⁴⁸

What then are the resources which a Christian understanding of the resurrection can bring to man caught in the leisure revolution? The first resource is in the area of a new understanding of time not in terms of chronos clock time but in the kairos time of opportunity or fulfillment. Time is not so much time on our hands as time in God's hands (Psalm 31:15) and the resurrection reminds us that all

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 32.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 32-33.

time is now in God's hands. In Jesus, time is fulfilled (Mark 1:15). In time, the Christ event calls man to "redeem the time" (Ephesians 5:15 and Colossians 4:5). His Lordship over all of life, including the time of our days, contains the clue to understanding how to handle our lives even in leisure.

Here as in an earlier issue, the doctrine of creation over which Christ's lordship is proclaimed in his resurrection is another clue to the meaning of the environment in which we must decide how we shall respond to our times in His world. The fourth commandment reflects the necessity of life being regulated so that a man's work is not so all-consuming that he has no time for contemplative rest. In his leisure, a man is re-created and creation continues. In the resurrection of Jesus, man finds God taking our times seriously. In the contemplative confrontation of the living Christ, men discovered the deeper meaning of everyday, the meaning of life behind bread and wine in the Emmaus supper room. And from the experience there arises a vocation responsibility of proclamation which gives purpose to our work and to our leisure.

PART FOUR: THE PREACHING PROJECT

CHAPTER VI

RESURRECTION FOCUS AND WORK FIELD: A MISSION IN COMMUNICATION IN A TECHNOLOGICAL AGE

In an introductory statement to Christians in a Technological Era, the noted anthropologist, Margaret Mead writes "Most young Americans tend to find absurd any attempt to juxtapose the historic Christian doctrine and our cybernetic age."¹ And yet until conversation is possible, Christianity is too often on the outside of life looking in not only on an area of life where the average male spends the majority of his time and energy but also on an area of life whose thought patterns cover and color much of life today.

Jean Ladrière in his essay "Faith and the Technician Mentality"² believes that there is a close relationship between three factors: technology, atheism, and liberation. Of the three, technology is the most important because it is the key to the vast transformation of human societies which is taking place now. In the spirit of the transformation, men are interested not so much in doctrines as in means of efficiently bringing about the transformation. The three words, technician mentality, demand for liberty and the atheistic spirit, are all characterized by "progressivism" where reason is a problem solving tool and by an emotional impatience before any

¹Hugh C. White, Jr., (ed.), Christians in a Technological Era (New York: Seabury Press, 1964), p. 12.

²Ibid., p. 47 ff.

wealth or energy which is not exploited or harnessed.

The technician mentality is characterized by such dangers as (1) "the concentration of power and human decision"; (2) "the reduction of man to the status of object"; (3) "the nihilism of the technician"; and, (4) "the disappearance of the sacred and the devaluation of the symbol".

The values of the technician mentality are (1) "the greatest possibility of justice"; (2) "the development of personality"; (3) the roots of a new humanism"; and, (4) "the spiritual value of technology" in terms of dynamism not of reason but of grace. It is to this technician mentality and enterprise that the Christian hope brings meaning to the new dynamism and its finality.

What the Christian faith reveals to us is that the work of man goes beyond itself, that it is assumable, and has in fact been assumed in a movement which surpasses it, and which links it to the very life of the totality, the life of the totality which is quite simply the very life of God.³

How does the Christian gospel relate to a mentality where permanence is passé, where not to change is to stagnate, where to be new is to be better, or where utility is more vital than ultimacy? One must recognize that the communication problem for Christian faith is split-level. On one level the conversation might be between Christian laymen committed to the technician's approach and clergymen. On another level the conversation might be between men who are partly committed to the Christian way and partly committed to the technician mentality and other men who are totally technologically oriented.

³Ibid. p. 76.

And within almost every Christian there will be an inner dialogue between the part of him committed to the Christian faith and the part of him committed to his technological world.⁴

Moreover a tremendous psychological chasm exists between the world of work and the world of faith beyond the general geographical chasm of the institutional church located in the residential community and the work world in the business or industrial community. Operating between these two worlds are three types of laymen (1) the layman who accepts the categories of faith as being final and immediately communicable to the work world; (2) the layman who while he takes his faith seriously has no real interest or determination to take that faith into his place of work; and, (3) finally the layman who claims membership in some church but hasn't the vaguest idea about the faith or any notion that there could be any connection between the two worlds of work and worship.⁵ These are a few of the problems facing the challenge of communication of the faith to the world of work. We shall consider now, several of the approaches of the church to communicate meaning to the world of work.

During the last twenty-five to thirty years, there has been a growing movement in the church which has recognized its disassociation with the world and with the workingman in particular. Combined with the feeling of need for renewal of the church and the loss of the workingman has been the development of the small group approach to ministry.

⁴Ibid., p. 134.

⁵Ibid.

Among the examples which will now be considered briefly are (1) the Iona Community, (2) Germany's Evangelical Academies, (3) Protestant Lay Centers in America, (4) on-the-job ethics seminars, and, (5) dialogical preaching.

I. THE IONA COMMUNITY

Useful material for the understanding of the Iona community can be found in T. Ralph Morton's two books The Household of Faith and The Iona Community Story. Morton is the Deputy Leader of Iona.

The Iona Community is a result of the vision of Dr. George MacLeod who, after eight years of ministry in Glasgow during the depression, realized how inadequate the church was in its ministry to the workingman. He believed that there was a need to relate the whole gospel to the whole of life in such a way that the economic and political areas would be covered.

The availability of the old abbey on Iona offered an opportunity for a training center, removed from the pressures of the city, as well as the actual opportunity for constructive work where clergy and laymen could work together and worship together in a community of openness and study. Patterns of Christian community experienced in Iona are put into practice by the community members when they return to their regular vocations in church and work world.

II. GERMANY'S EVANGELICAL ACADEMIES

Useful for the understanding of the academy movement are

Bridges to Understanding by Margaret Frakes, The German Phoenix by Franklin Littell, Lee J. Gable's Church and World Encounter as well as articles in the International Journal of Religious Education during the summer of 1965.

The academy movement developed in Germany following the close of World War II. It fast became a resource of reconstruction as a place of meeting similar to a conference center or retreat center. Long denied free discussion under the Hitler regime, the academies provided just such desired opportunities to face the vital issues in encounter.

Some elements which are common to the thirteen academies in Germany are (1) they are vocationally oriented; (2) they deal with problems from life; (3) they all have facilities to house conferences; (4) they use the discussion medium as a major part of their program; (5) they all use the Bible to bear on the themes under discussion; (6) they involve the use of worship, free time, contemporary voices from literature, music and art, as well as a follow-up.⁶

Dr. Gable quotes an evaluation of this work from the work of nine German church leaders who see on the debit side of the ledger such matters as personnel weaknesses, small impact, discontinuity, setbacks from unfulfilled hopes. On the positive side they noted such matters as the benefit of new insights for the church; the

⁶Lee J. Gable, "Germany's Evangelical Academies, What Are They?" International Journal of Religious Education, XLI:10 (June 1965), 13-15.

discovery of new missionary approaches; and the Christian's recognition that he is responsible for service to others.⁷

Dr. Gable later evaluates what he considers to be the basic principles involved for anyone who is involved with a church-world confrontation. He suggests that

1. Sponsorship must be acceptable to all persons for whom the encounter is intended. . .
2. The place of meeting must be neutral. . .
3. Issues must be crucial. . .
4. Trust in people's ability to arrive at sound answers to their questions. . .
5. There must be willingness to take risks. . .
6. Work programs must meet changing circumstances. . .⁸

Here as in the Iona community, there is an attempt to enter dialogic conversation with man in the world to communicate the gospel only after one has listened to the voice coming from the man in the world.

III. PROTESTANT LAY CENTERS IN AMERICA

For an over-view of the lay renaissance movement in America, Religion in Life in its winter, 1961-62 issue has provided a useful resource and summary from men who are knowledgeable in the various areas of the movement in America. Sections of an unpublished Rel.D.

⁷Ibid., pp. 14 and 42.

⁸Lee J. Gable, "Germany's Evangelical Academies, Expanded Horizons and Implications," International Journal of Religious Education, XLI:11 (July-August, 1965), 14-15.

thesis of Francis L. Wagner bearing the title "Emerging Forms of the Church" contain valuable materials from this field.

In an article "The Lay Renaissance and the Church's Nature," Dr. Frederick K. Wentz lists three insights emerging from the attempts of the church to identify with the world. First, Christians and the church must learn to listen with infinite care and with no pre-judgment to the present age and modern man. Second, modern man has a social passion that is God-given which views life as a whole. Third, modern man is secular in that he is cut off from any transcendent meaning or ultimate commitment.⁹

To meet the opportunities implicit in these insights, a strategy is emerging which recognizes several things. First, laymen are a major resource not just because of numbers but also because they are at the right places on the frontier of the work world. Second, the one acceptable program of the Christian ethic and faith is in terms of loving service to one's neighbor. Third, the style of life which has the possibility of penetrating the work world must be dialectic, moving back and forth between the common life of man and the resources of faith.¹⁰

Having said these things about the lay movement, consider now one example of the lay movement in America, remembering at the same

⁹Frederick K. Wentz, "The Lay Renaissance and the Church's Nature," Religion in Life, XXIX:2 (Spring 1960), 240-241.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 244-46.

time that the majority of these movements here reflect the influence of similar movements in Great Britain and on the Continent. So the marks of Iona can be seen on Kirkridge, Pennsylvania, the influence of the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches in Bossey, Switzerland can be seen in Parishfield or in the Christian Faith and Life Community in Austin, the influence of the Sheffield Mission in England can be seen in the Detroit Industrial Mission, and, the marks of Bad Boll Evangelical Academy can be seen on the Institute of Church and Community of the Hartford Theological Seminary.¹¹

The Detroit Industrial Mission is an attempt by the church to engage in a specialized ministry to a large urban-industrial complex. The effort is ecumenical in scope and direction. It seeks to minister in society through the institutional roles that man takes in society, particularly in his work world. Staff members of the mission work with labor and management.

Scott Paradise who worked both in Sheffield and in Detroit points to the ministry of such missions when he responded to a question as to the need for the one in Detroit inasmuch as sixty percent of the people there are in church on Sunday. He writes in answer to this question of the validity of the effort

But this remark is mistaken if it suggests that industrial mission is supposed to get people to go to church or to use

¹¹ Cameron P. Hall, "Protestant Lay Centers in America," Religion in Life, XXXI:1 (Winter 1961-62), 16-17.

industry as a convenient platform for evangelism. In fact, industrial mission would be just as necessary if 100 percent of the population went to church, for its task is to bridge the gulf between the faith of the church and the world of work. And this gulf is just as wide in Detroit as in Sheffield. On the one hand the average clergyman pursues activities and is absorbed in problems that are remote (psychologically as well as geographically) from the world of industry. On the other hand the laymen in industry generally proceed in a state of blissful ignorance of the kind of theology that will make much sense in their jobs. Those who are seriously concerned to live as Christians in their place of work struggle along with very little support from their pastor or other church members. They need expert, full-time help in order to discover for themselves the meaning of the Christian faith for the life and operation of industry. This is the kind of help that industrial mission is designed to supply.¹²

IV. ON-THE-JOB ETHICS SEMINARS

For the past several years the Department of the Church and Economic Life of the National Council of Churches has sponsored a special project in which lay groups of about twelve members each met in six different cities. Each group's membership was confined to a particular occupation such as banking, building contracting, business management, labor union work, personnel administration, and public relations. Each group had a convenor who initiated, continued and sustained the group discussions. The membership was made up of church and nonchurch members.¹³

A full description of these seminars is to be found in Chapter V

¹² Scott I. Paradise, "A Tale of Two Cities: The Industrial Missions in Sheffield and Detroit," Religion in Life, XXXI:1 (Winter 1962-62), 38.

¹³ Cameron P. Hall, "on-the-job-ethics," International Journal of Religious Education, XLI:4 (December 1964), 10.

under SOME ISSUES TO BE FACED IN THE FIELD OF WORK. The seminars are noted here because they are also mission attempts in communication in a technological age.

V. DIALOGICAL PREACHING

Dialogical preaching is an attempt to make preaching more relevant by delivering it from the monologic sterility which short-circuits real communication between the man in the pulpit and the man in the pew. It is employed in this general context as one of several missionary attempts to communicate with the technician mentality.

Clyde Reid indicates that there are at least seven phases to the communication process. Writing of the process he says

- 1) Transmission occurs when the communicator presents his message (or delivers his sermon).
- 2) Contact occurs when the listener has heard the message.
- 3) When the listener is allowed to ask a question, make comment, or otherwise express himself concerning the content of the message, feedback is established and there is a potentiality for dialogue.
- 4) Comprehension. Having clarified his understanding of the message, the listener now comprehends what it is the communicator is trying to say to him.
- 5) Acceptance. Having understood the message, the listener now accepts, ignores, or rejects it. His prior beliefs and attitudes, his relationships with influential persons, and his primary group relationships may modify his acceptance or rejection of the message.
- 6) Internalization. Beyond simply accepting the message intellectually, the listener internalizes it when it becomes his own, a part of his own being, and it begins to influence his behaviour.

7) Complete Communication. At this point the communicator and listener (who also has become a communicator in the two-way process) have a common, shared understanding and are acting on the basis of this understanding. A transfer of meaning has taken place which influences conduct.¹⁴

The very absence of such dialogue in preaching may be central to understanding why preaching today achieves so little in the way of transformed lives. If the failure lies at the point of what Reuel Howe in The Miracle of Dialogue calls the "monological illusion" in which "telling" is no surety of communication taking place,¹⁵ then what are some of the ways in which dialogical communication can be built into our preaching?

Seward Hiltner in his Preface to Pastoral Psychology develops as a perspective for communicating the gospel a conceptual model usually known as "field theory."¹⁶ To describe the concept, he uses as an illustration a magnet and iron filings. The center of the operative force is known as a "focus" and the whole sphere of influence is the "field."

The focus is the point or points at which influence is greatest. The field, for practical purposes, may extend but a short distance; but theoretically its extension is indefinite. Thus the place

¹⁴Clyde Henderson Reid, "Preaching and the Nature of Communication," Pastoral Psychology, XIV:137 (October 1963), 42.

¹⁵Reuel L. Howe, The Miracle of Dialogue (New York: Seabury Press, 1963), p. 32.

¹⁶Seward Hiltner, Preface to Pastoral Psychology (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), pp. 56-61.

which the field, relative to the focus, becomes the important question - not the misleading questions as to whether there is or is not influence. A categorical yes or no is seen to be irrelevant to the problem.¹⁷

With such a model, preaching becomes much more exacting. One must determine exactly what is the unique, distinctive, saving, ultimate part of the gospel in which he is focusing his understanding of the field. In like fashion an understanding of the field to which one seeks to communicate is basic not in broad general terms but in exact and specific terms. Such an approach is compatible with such principles of communication which emphasize the importance of an environment of acceptance, that distortion takes place not just from the absence of something but also from the presence of something else, that real communication must touch the frame of reference of the person or group to whom it is addressed and, finally communication is a two-way process.¹⁸ It is due to the influence of Hiltner's "focus-field" conceptual model that the preaching project related to this thesis is in terms of the resurrection of Jesus as the doctrinal focus and the area of work in a technological society as the field of concentration. The specific project dealt with will be presented in Chapter VII.

While there are a variety of attempts of dialogic preaching ranging from "dialogue sermons," in which two speakers talk back and forth from pulpit to lectern on a common theme, the dialogue

¹⁷Ibid., p. 57.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 192-94.

which comes from pastoral calling, post-worship sermon discussions, pre-worship sermon clinics, in which the message is outlined by the preacher to a group of laymen who react to the sermon before it is finally preached, and small personal groups which engage in Bible study on materials relevant to the preaching, there are three related approaches to dialogical preaching which should be considered at this point.

The first approach is that of Dr. Dietrich Ritschl, professor of the history of doctrine at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. His ideas which emphasize the fact that the event of preaching is one in which the congregation participates and bears responsibility are found in his book A Theology of Proclamation and in a series "The Event of Preaching" to be found in Crossroads magazine for adult study in the United Presbyterian Church.

Ritschl recognizes the difficulty of getting a group which will regularly perform the role of working through the sermon with the pastor. As a result, he suggests youth groups, confirmation class or even an elected group of laymen. To select the text at least three methods are open: the use of the Church year lectionary; the use of a continuous lectionary from a part of or a whole book of the Bible, or to leave the selection of the text to the pastor. This latter procedure, he would find acceptable only if the pastor could be in consultation with his people each week.¹⁹ While the laymen would

¹⁹Dietrich Ritschl, A Theology of Proclamation (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 149 ff.

work with the pastor in the preparation of the sermon, in the last analysis, the pastor must assume the responsibility for the final preparation of the sermon.²⁰

Describing in detail several methods of dialogic preparation, Ritschl says of his experiences

I, for one, tried six years to set Wednesday night apart for a meeting of ten to twenty responsible church members. We spent the first hour in evaluating the preceding Sunday's sermon and devoted the second hour to the preparation for the coming Sunday. This experience proved immensely helpful. One reason for this was the very routine of meeting every week at a certain set time. The members felt free to speak openly and critically as they knew this time had been set for this special purpose. After coming to this country, I preached for four years in a small church in Texas. There it seemed impossible to make such an arrangement. Not wishing to be deprived of the counsel of the church members, I decided to preach only on Biblical texts that had been discussed in church school the Sunday prior to the sermon. Thus, I was able to hear the people's questions, answers, or scruples about my text before making my final preparations. The members of the congregation soon discovered this procedure, and they began to ask questions in the hope that I would deal with them in my sermon on the following Sunday.²¹

Dr. Browne Barr in his Yale Lectures of 1963 which appeared under the title Parish Back Talk described how Ritschl's work affected the preaching done in the church he serves as pastor.²² In the development of this method of dialogic preaching in the First Congregational Church of Berkeley, on Wednesday nights at 8:15,

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 7-8 and 156-57.

²¹ Dietrich Ritschl, "The Event of Preaching," Crossroads, XV:3 (April-June 1965), 79-80.

²² Browne Barr, Parish Back Talk (New York: Abingdon Press, 1964), p. 76 ff.

interested members gathered to prepare for the coming Sunday. The preacher does a brief nontechnical exegesis of the bible passage under consideration and then the group divides into small groups of eight to ten persons to discuss the passage for forty minutes, followed by a report from the discussion groups, and a closing prayer time. The preacher does as little talking as possible in this process of witnessing, confession, doubting and supporting.

Writing of the experiences in Berkeley, Dr. Barr says

You may be wondering what this has done to the sermon. On the superficial level it has given the minister someone besides himself to blame when the sermon lies down and dies shortly after the text has been read. On a bit deeper level it has frequently, indeed almost invariably, led the preacher where he had no suspicion he might go. This is, of course, true of all expository preaching, but it is especially true when the congregation is gathered to respond to the scripture. The preacher is not left high and dry, hunting for illustrations and relevancies.²³

The third example of dialogic work is the unpublished doctoral thesis of Clyde Henderson Reid, Th.D., 1960 from the Boston University School of Theology with the title "Two-Way Communication Through Small Groups in Relation to Preaching." Because of the failure of communication through preaching as evidenced in three areas: tithing, race relations and death, the author is in search of supplementary means to aid in preaching as a communications media.²⁴ With the development of face-to-face groups in the church, a relationship between the

²³Ibid., p. 79.

²⁴Clyde Henderson Reid, "Two-Way Communication Through Small Groups in Relation to Preaching" (unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Boston University School of Theology, 1960), p. 2.

dynamic two-way communication of that media is explored as a supplement to preaching and as the one concept that links the two areas. The purpose of the dissertation is "to determine whether participation in small groups (where two-way communication is present) increases an individual's responsiveness to preaching."²⁵ The matter is dealt with first by a consideration of the literature related to two-way communication and the small group movement, and second through a research project to explore the relation between preaching and small groups in the church. The thesis illustrates the value of the small group and preaching in terms of increased responsiveness to preaching, in terms of understanding, relevancy of the sermon, as well as improving church attendance and fellowship both with other members and the minister, where doubts and feelings could better be expressed. By this method of the small groups, preaching can become a dialogical process rather than a monological process. And as a result, the dialogical approach to preaching may come closer to restoring the witness of every Christian not just through the pew but also through the pulpit.

In summary, it seems important to note that the concern for renewal and relevancy of the gospel and church to the world has been growing for almost thirty years. Furthermore, it has taken many forms of expression but in every case there has been a note of anxious concern to enter into conversation with man and the world as if for too long the church had talked but not listened. As a result, "dialogue"

²⁵Ibid., p. 4.

seems to be the key word describing the various movements' communication mission to man and his world.

As the dialogue develops in different forms, several clues or ground rules for the directing of this dialogue have taken shape. First, we must explore the full meaning of the dialogue, quite aware that the gospel we seek to proclaim is really not a clearly understood faith in terms of the changing world of technology. Such an exploration demands honesty, openness, modesty and patient restraint. Second, the dialogue must sound the note of affirmation which expresses appreciation for the achievement and promise seen in industry and technology for man. Third, Christianity must be shown to be relevant so as to make a practical difference to those who live in the world of work. Christian insight must be in concrete terms. Fourth, perhaps before we can talk about a transcendent God, we shall have to give evidence that we can talk about human needs and human values in an anthropological approach. Fifth, we can not underestimate the importance of hearing. The church must move into the technological world and listen long and hard until it knows what really basic questions are being asked. New instruments such as academies, lay training centers, industrial missions, yes even dialogic preaching whose talk back occurs at barbecues and private homes, all move the discussion to neutral ground. So the church develops new forms whose shape is determined by her mission to man in the world.²⁶

²⁶White, op. cit., p. 138 ff.

The chapter which follows will attempt to bring together the findings of a preaching project held in the West Covina Methodist Church. The project is one in the area of dialogic preaching in the perspective of the "focus-field" theory and the various missions which attempt to restore communication between the church and the world, between the gospel and man caught in the technician's mentality. In the opening chapters, the theological resource of the resurrection of Jesus with its ethical implications as seen in Rudolf Bultmann, Paul Tillich, and Emil Brunner have been explored. Then some of the issues in the field of work have been considered. Having now considered dialogic preaching as one of various missions in communication in a technological age, we consider now the attempted project in dialogic preaching from a doctrinal focus in the resurrection to the field of work.

CHAPTER VII

THE PREACHING PROJECT

In the previous chapters, an attempt has been made to set the theological focus in the resurrection of Jesus Christ through a consideration of the sermons of Rudolf Bultmann, Paul Tillich and Emil Brunner, and then to explore the field of work. Chapter VI has set the dialogic preaching as one of many missionary efforts seeking to improve communication between the church and the world of the working man in a technological culture. With this background before us, the preaching project is an attempt to combine two major approaches for the enrichment of preaching. The first of these major approaches is the utilization of the focus-field method from Seward Hiltner.¹ In this particular instance the focus is the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus. The field of concern is that of work in a technological society. The second major approach is the combination of the preaching of the sermon with a small group process of preparation beforehand and evaluation after the fact.

This is the third such experience for the author. The first such experiment was conducted during Lent of 1965 on a general church basis. The second attempt to use this method was a summer preaching project on the Ten Commandments with youth group participation from Junior High School through Wesley Fellowship (college age). The present experience is in relation to the doctrinal focus of the

¹Seward Hiltner, Preface to Pastoral Psychology (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), pp. 192-04.

resurrection of Jesus and the field of work in a technological society, conducted in the Fall of 1965.

This chapter will consider in turn 1) the sermon series composition; 2) the Pulpit Talk Back; and, 3) conclusions and areas for further study.

I. THE SERMON SERIES COMPOSITION

The sermon series employs a doctrinal focus in the resurrection of Jesus which is cast as a spotlight on the field of work in a technological society. In order to sharpen the focus in the resurrection, the work of three twentieth century theologians, who are also known for ethical concerns and as preachers, was used as a resource. The three men were Bultmann, Tillich and Brunner. Earlier chapters II, III, and IV of this thesis deal with their work. The preacher made use of each man in turn for two sermons in which his contribution to the understanding of the resurrection was employed, as well as his understanding of the ethical implications of this doctrine for the field of work in a technological society. It was beneficial to note that in each instance each man had significant contributions to make to our understanding of the resurrection and each was aware of some of the ethical dimensions or problems related to working in a technological society. And, each was a preacher with printed materials in which his attempts to be relevant are evident.

The sermons were preached deliberately in a non-Eastertide season in the belief that if the resurrection is central to the

Christian faith, one need not wait till Easter to deal with the matter. Furthermore, it was felt that the impact might be even greater, "out-of-season" in the traditional sense. Also, preaching the sermons as a series pointed to the extensive body of literature in the New Testament when many preachers and laymen now view the resurrection as an occasional sermon for the special occasion of Easter Sunday or for funerals. Commenting on the series someone remarked, "When you go to the next church pastorate, you will have enough Easter sermons for seven years!"

II. THE PULPIT TALK BACK

Pulpit Talk Back is a more formal title for the meetings held with laymen both before and after the sermon. Each Monday evening from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., a small group of men came together as a result of a personal invitation to share in the searching of the Scriptures before each Sunday to discern what for them was the Word of God, particularly in relation to their work lives. And, then they were to return the following week to discuss and witness to the Word in their lives. The result, of course, was that except for the first and last sessions, each session was a combination of looking first at the results of the previous Sunday's sermon and second to consider what might be the direction of the coming Sunday's message.

The participants were provided the Scripture lesson for the coming Sunday in advance so that they could ponder and reflect on it before coming to the Pulpit Talk Back. The preacher would go over the

passage and outline some ideas which he thought were relevant for the coming Sunday and then the group joined in on the discussion, making what contributions they felt were pertinent or challenging the validity of the preacher's logic.

The group was aware that the sessions were being taped. The presence of the microphone on the table was at no time a barrier to openness of conversation. The tapes were used by the preacher after the experience, before finalizing the sermon for the next Sunday at a time when he could reflectively listen to what the group had been saying. The tapes were also played back in their totality as a basis for the conclusions which will be drawn here in the next section.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER EXPERIMENTATION

As a result of participation in the Pulpit Talk Back group and then listening to these experiences through the taped recordings of them, these conclusions have been reached.

General conclusions. 1. The procedure was an excellent experience of the fact that the man in the pulpit as well as the man in the pew needs to learn how to listen. For the man in the pulpit it was a frightening experience to observe how often what was said was never heard or when heard, it was through the perceptual screen of the listeners, colored with all his deep prejudices and corporate guilt.

2. The procedure offered the preacher a listening post on a regular basis with representative members. They in turn had the

feeling of being involved and responsible not just for the preparation but the results of the sermon through their evaluations. Preaching became a communal affair. The men were soon sharing stories from their daily work. This was done in spite of the group not being from a single vocational orientation.

3. The procedure revealed the possibilities of the worshipper's self-preparation for worship through the reading of the lesson prior to coming to the service. The results raise the question of the real value of printing the lesson and topic for the coming Sunday either in the weekly newsletter or bulletin with words of encouragement. One pastor has his people read the lesson for the next Sunday, reflect and then write him a note before Wednesday if they have any real feelings in response.

4. The Pulpit Talk Back time has the advantage on the one side for the preacher to hear what questions his people are really asking. On the other side, the man in the pew has the satisfaction of communicating with the preacher the questions which are really disturbing him as he seeks to lead a Christian life each day.

5. The procedure reminds the preacher that the layman does think in theological terms. In some sessions, the men present expressed no dependence on the preacher as the final authority for faith and practice. At the same time they discovered that they did not need to be embarrassed in the expression of doubt, uncertainty or lack of knowledge. It became less a sin not to know and to ask, than not to know and not to seek.

6. The Pulpit Talk Back group in a short time developed a kind of warmth of fellowship where compassion and honesty prevailed in an authentic way as together the members shared, witnessed to each other, judged and forgave. On one occasion the preacher's voice failed at the last section of the sermon. In the Pulpit Talk Back the next evening, there was a kind of fellowship which with deep understanding expressed sympathy for someone whose voice, or basic work equipment, failed. In many instances the preacher discovered that he was saying in the sermon introduction "We are gathered to do these things. . ." - an expression of the developing corporate sense of the preaching of the Word.

7. At the same time that fellowship closeness is mentioned, the playing back of the tapes reveals the number of times that the listener expressed hostility by his comments. Reid, in his thesis, refers to the fact that hostility will build up in a group toward the communicator when there is no opportunity for feedback.² A preacher has no business permitting himself to become involved in Pulpit Talk Back if he is going to be defensive. There will be instances of hostility expressed through superficial picking on minor issues. An accepting spirit and a sense of what is central is basic for the preacher if he is to be at all redemptive in the process. This is an area which merits further study.

8. The Pulpit Talk Back experiences revealed the need for

²Clyde Henderson Reid, "Two-Way Communication Through Small Groups in Relation to Preaching" (unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Boston University School of Theology, 1960), pp. 141-43.

utter simplicity in vocabulary and sermon structure due to the distance between apprehension skill in reading and the same skill in listening to the spoken word. Part of the problem is also due to the lack of a general foundation of Christian knowledge and experience among the laymen in the pew on any Sunday morning service. At the same time the Pulpit Talk Back procedure caused the layman to confess the difficulty in getting the right words to express himself as he tried to explain the meaning of the resurrection for his work, even though he kept at it.

9. The Pulpit Talk Back procedure is a good educational tool as the men had the opportunity to recall previous learnings from the experience as the weeks went on. There were many opportunities for repetition and reinforcement of learning. Also, it was noteworthy that at least one of the men began to take on other reading, such as Robinson's Honest to God. Certainly, the possibility for encouraging further search through personal reading from Sunday to Sunday is still quite unexplored and unexploited as a means to reinforce the growth of the listener.

Conclusions in the area of the resurrection and work. 1. The group early acknowledged that everyone has some kind of eschatology but life is so pressured that no one has much time to think deeply about the ultimate end of existence.

2. Christian existence is thought of more in terms of the moral teachings of Jesus than in terms of the resurrection. When one pressed the issue with "Which teachings?" the answers ranged from

silence to the Sermon on the Mount.

3. In time, however, the resurrection of Jesus became the basis for a sense of a value system with a new content.

4. By the end of the series there were moments in which some members of the group identified with one or the other of the three theologians used as resources. For example, one man indicated that as Bultmann he had always thought more in terms of the crucifixion because that was historical rather than in terms of the resurrection.

5. It was evident both in the response to the preaching and in the Pulpit Talk Back that most of the people are more heavily oriented to the Greek philosophy of immortality than to the Christian belief in the resurrection. The sermon which dealt with the two was very disturbing.

6. For at least one man, the resurrection became something more than an intellectual idea as he discovered its centrality and its quality of love and forgiveness. He spoke of the experience which was related directly to a deep emotional crisis at work:

The relevance of the Resurrection has been very evident at the point where I earn my living. Specifically, one experience points toward the kind of redemption that no amount of moralistic doctrine could realize. The situation was a threatening personal dispute at work. Out of seemingly insurmountable differences came a respect for the worth of the other person and mutual acceptance. It is difficult to imagine this kind of expression being born from any source other than that love which surpasses all understanding, the love inspired by God's word as seen in the Resurrection.

7. When asked what problems the group felt there were to understanding the resurrection, the group did not hesitate one moment. Such answers came as "no proof"; "too fantastic"; "can't

get it down on paper"; "never been told convincingly"; or, "Easter sermons go in one ear and out the other."

8. The Pulpit Talk Back experiences opened avenues of conversation for the men to try to interpret their work, its opportunities and problems with some of the everyday experiences they were having.

9. Any reference to leisure was generally greeted with boisterous laughter. For these men, leisure is practically non-existent, at least as they understand leisure. Certainly the brief references made to leisure reveal a great area for which we have little understanding and great frustration.

10. One man indicated that in the light of the resurrection, profits take on a different complexion. The resurrection gave him a wholistic approach to his work in such a way that "it blew away the smoke," so as to see reality.

11. In another instance, one man's attitude turned from being unforgiving and self-seeking to being forgiving and concerned in something more than what was in it for him. Forgiveness was crucial to a work crisis which he was then facing.

12. It must be indicated at least at the beginning, there was real reluctance to concede that work should be discussed from the pulpit. The reaction verged almost on hostile rejection, as if work belonged to another world which they had to face from Monday to Friday but not in their suburban sanctuary. In any event there was a preliminary blocking at this point which changed in time.

Some dangers and areas for further work. 1. There is an evident danger that the small group was an "in" group on what was going on while the average congregation member was a part of the "out" group.

2. There is a danger that after the stimulation of the group process, the preacher will forget that the total congregation has not been involved with this preparation and preach as if they have been thus equipped.

3. There was felt to be some danger in the usage of material gained from the Pulpit Talk Back by the preacher even though it was completely anonymous. A lengthy discussion revealed, however, that most of the group felt that not to use the material where relevant was to fail to take advantage of the insights gained or shared and that the average listener would feel even more sure that this material had been under the sharing and scrutiny of preacher and laymen together under God's guidance.

4. The area of dealing with hostility has been expressed as a value. It is expressed here as a danger for the layman who is not generally used to talking back to the preacher as God's agent and for the preacher who is not accustomed to being talked back to.

5. A final danger rests in trying to accomplish too many things in any sermon series or Pulpit Talk Back meeting. The danger comes precisely at the point that one gets caught imposing an exterior structure on the scriptures and not being free to open to what the Word of God is saying to the covenant community.

6. Consider now some further areas for study. There is a need to do more work in the area of preaching using Seward Hiltner's three levels of communication both that the layman can realize the different levels of approach being made to him in a sermon and for the preacher that he might be aware of the broader possibilities for communication.³ Level one is concerned with learning, understanding, or instruction through which we realize or assimilate what we had known or possessed previously. Level two is concerned with realizing, deepening, or edifying through which we recognize the new, deeper or broader meaning to that which has been known or possessed before. The third level is concerned with celebrating, reminding or commemoration which is realizing or assimilation that becomes deeper not through new ideas or the perception of new connections but through corporate acknowledging.

7. One could explore further the value or disservice of sermon titles, particularly their being announced beforehand. Do they cause people to come with preconceived notions of what the preacher is going to do so that the person is not really open to anything else? Or, are they useful in getting the listener started in his thoughts? Or, are they of no value at all?

8. Further work needs to be done at the point of motivation of the congregation as to their possible participation as the covenant community along with the preacher in the preaching of the Word

³Hiltner, op. cit., pp. 182.

on Sunday in the sermon. One must acknowledge a cultural image of sermons as that to which we listen without too much further involvement either before or after the fact.

9. Pulpit Talk Back is but one of many kinds of small groups. Further exploration of what kinds of small groups are most useful in the fulfillment of dialogical preaching should be done. And at the same time, further exploration needs to be done as to the style of worship which involves the same parallel responsiveness with the preacher who believes in the dialogic approach to life of the faithful, by the faithful and for the faithful of the covenant community.

In conclusion, the focus-field approach makes the preacher's approach to the field of life more sharply focused through the use of a single doctrine. The Pulpit Talk Back procedure offers one approach which delivers the sermon from being a monologic presentation to be a dialogue or two-way communication, as well as to provide the environment of love and fellowship where change can take place. In such an environment, change is reinforced or supported as a result of the preaching and the hearing of the Word of God. Preaching in this manner has built-in the bases for continued, creative evaluation that should deliver it from becoming outmoded.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A.

"GOD'S VICTORY AND OURS: BEYOND MORALISM"
September 19, 1965

The riverboat captains that piloted the boats up and down the rivers of America were men of infinite wisdom. They knew that after the storms and the high floods it was necessary if they were to take their cargoes through that they would regularly have to sound the channel depths to be sure where the channels lay as they went along. They would have to check out the guide lines, the markings along the way, to make sure where it was possible for them to get life's cargo through.

Today in the Christian life, we face something of that anxious uncertainty which the riverboat captain or pilot faced. That is to say, we are faced with the fact that the revolutions of our time have changed the channels of life and the old guide lines, the old markings, the old channel soundings are not always in the same place where we once found them in days gone by. Only those who really find the channel depths of what Rudolf Bultmann calls a radical obedience to the God who raised Jesus from the dead will find the direction for life itself today. So I want you to examine with me for a few moments this morning first the nature of the bankruptcy of much current moralism and secondly, to ask ourself what is the alternative to this failure of moralism to bring us through in life. What is it that gives us God's victory in our time? What are the questions we must ask ourselves? This is our purpose in these moments.

Let us pray.

O almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men: grant unto these thy people that they may love the thing which thou dost command, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The first thing that I want to say is that you must be aware with me how inadequate are many of the moralisms of our day, the cliches which pass for rightness and righteousness. How inadequate these things are as we face the revolutions of our time. The revolutions which are international, religious, business, technological, leisure time, work, all these many things are but a part of the changing tides, the changing channels of life, of our time. And you and I know that no pre-packaged morality really ever serves finally and ultimately.

The old cliches which many people expect from the church are empty and vacuous. The church is that body or institution which indicates the moralistic, pietistic, directions for life. But, we know in our heart of hearts that this moralism does not always serve us. Grandious pretentions to absolute rightness is a form of snobbery, a form of smugness, which fails to take into consideration the changing channels of life, the changing conditions in which we live. Many of these old moralisms and cliches have no weight with us in our time and yet many of us seek to govern our lives by some of them.

In the business realm, for example, is it still safe to say, as a moralistic guide, "It's just good business" or It's just not good business"? Or again, "Sorry, nothing personal, mind you" as we

deal with different kinds of employees or people who seek employment with us. Or again in the sexual revolution, is it enough to say to our girl going away to college, "Nice girls don't do this" or "Nice girls do that" and expect it to stick as a really ultimate guide line which has the power to change a young person's life? You read if you doubt this Gael Greene's book Sex and the College Girl or you read another book that's on the newsstands now Sex and the Single Girl. Here are certainly changing channels in our time. The ancient moralisms are not holding the line I'm afraid. And yet, how does the churchy business man, cluck, cluck, piously, when the very business of our generation uses the female body as an advertisement for everything from lawn mowers to steer manure. This attitude is perfectly ridiculous.

Again, in the face of leisure time revolution when more and more of our people take longer weekends to beach, mountain, desert, shall we continue to say as we appear to be so anxious to get away from work, what work is good? We ought to work. He who does not work does not eat. What shall we say in the face of leisure time. What kind of life will we lead in our leisure time, our free time? Are the moralisms of our time sufficient to cover this?

Again some of us say, moralistically, I'm going to let my child choose his religion. Does this mean to say that if he prefers to be a communist you'll let him? What you mean, I suspect, is that he can choose what denomination he wants. And yet, do you mean to say by, I shall let my child choose his religion, that you will permit

him to choose whether he will be Christian or not? What do you mean?

Or again, consider the moralism which says, my family comes first. I thought that I read the commandment to say that God was first. Does your family really come first in your life? Or is it just first at sometimes when you seek to satisfy or assuage your guilt for having given it so little time otherwise?

Now the thing you must be aware of as I am aware, that much of the current moralism is negative. It is negative, drab, uninspiring, rigid. It is sterile as far as producing any change in how we are inside ourselves. It may make us fly straight for a bit, and that may be important, but does it change us inside? I insist that much of current moralism has no power to change a person inside. It is ostrich like, causing us to hide our head in the sand. But the sands shift with the winds of time, and we're continually being exposed in our most tender parts. Or again much moralism is so inflexible, rigid with its demand for principle. And with so little concern for persons.

As such Christian morality cannot be pre-packaged. What then do we offer? What then is the alternative, you ask, if you too feel this desire for something more than moralism? The second thing I would suggest this morning is a really vital alternative for something more than moralism is a radical obedience to God, to the purposes of God, who raised again from the dead our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. That is to say, if this God has done this, what power might he have in my life? To what extent do I respond to Him from day to day?

At the beginning of our pulpit talk back the other night someone protested vehemently, "Well, what's all this business about the resurrection? Aren't the teachings of Jesus good enough?" And I dropped the ball. I should have said, "Which ones? Which teachings?" But more than this, if you turn to the New Testament, you are impressed by the fact that the early church, at least as far as the New Testament record is concerned, does not place a great deal of emphasis on the teachings of Jesus, on the Ten Commandments, or on the Golden Rule. These things which we pass off for a kind of abstract moralism in our day, without even probing the depths of their meaning point us to the God to whom we yield.

The sixth chapter of Romans is a fit example of that which is beyond moralism. In this chapter Paul helps you and me understand not just what is the Christian life, but also what is the motivation which keeps us in the Christian life. While Paul does not say it in so many words, the conviction comes through loud and clear that a man's moral problems are best understood in the light of the purpose of God as seen in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is the basic premise upon which Paul operates in this chapter.

As we put our moral problems in the light of God's purpose as seen in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we find a meaningful understanding, a motivation and power by which we can govern our life beyond moralism. This relationship and response is vital, dynamic, and alive. And what is Paul pointing to in this passage? The first thing that Paul points to in this passage is this: sin or

evil is a deposed tyrant because of Christ's resurrection. He is saying that in the light of this fact the evils that we face in life, as deadly as they still may be, have no final control over our life. We cannot finally and ultimately be done in by them if we choose God in faith. I would liken it in a rather earthy way as to facing a skunk whose scent sacs have been removed. While he can bit you, there is not the threat that was once there. Or again consider a rattler whose fangs had been pulled who may still take hold of you and rattle threateningly but he has no longer the power to kill. This is what Paul is talking about. He is saying that sin and evil, the forces of evil in the world, are basically at their root, deposed tyrants. This gives me courage. I feel that the odds are not as great as they once were, without God.

Secondly, Paul goes on to say that we are called to yield ourselves to God. This is radical obedience. We are to yield ourselves to Him as instruments of righteousness, to do what is right in the world. Now this belief does not arise simply from the fact that a miracle happened way back in Christ's resurrection. Rather it is the confidence that is based upon the simple fact that a miracle can happen here and now in your life and mine. Life can be different now.

What Paul is talking about is the radical obedience about which Rudolf Bultmann, one of the current noted theologians, talks. For Bultmann, radical obedience is the yielding of life completely to God, for his direction, moment by moment by moment. And even while Bultmann may deny the objective historical reality of Christ's resurrection, he does us the favor to point us to the possibility for our

lives now. How does this work out? Simply that as we hear the word of God addressed to us in the resurrection our existential choice is whether we shall obey or disobey him, agree with God or disagree with God, not with the Church, not with the preacher but ultimately how shall we respond to God.

Now I was not in the Navy, but there is a command in the Navy that at least has this meaning for me. The command goes out "Now hear this!" As I understand the command, it does not mean "Now boys, you all listen and if you like it, go ahead and do what I say." That isn't what I hear when I hear that word spoken. "Now hear this," as I hear it, means "Hear this and obey now!" Obedience is a basic part of hearing. This linking of hearing and obedience is quite in harmony with the language of Hebrew, Greek and Latin, where there is no specific word for obedience. There is no specific word to obey. In the hearing of God's direction for our lives, obedience is implicit. To truly hear God speaking to my life implies that I shall either obey or disobey. It is not a matter of whether I like it or I don't like it. It is simply a question of whether I yield to God or whether I thumb my nose to God. It is that simple. And so the question to you and to me in the light of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is, "Do I yield or don't I? Do I yield my life to God's direction in obedience or do I insist that the Cross and the resurrection really have nothing to do with me in anything that I am or do from day to day?" This is a question that you all must answer as I must answer. Whether we realize it or not when we are baptized, we symbolically,

ritually enact the drama, the drama of one who yields his life to God. What we are saying when we baptize our children is simply this, "I yield my child's life to God. I will seek to have my child, through the years become a person who yields himself to God for God's direction so that as he is buried with Christ in baptism, he is also raised to newness of life. This is my hope and expectation."

More than this, Paul says in the third place, that in the light of the resurrection we are encouraged to see ourselves not just as we are in our weaknesses and our failures, but that in Christ's Resurrection there is given the hope that we continue to look at ourselves as we might become, as we shall be. Brethren, this opens windows in life for me. Life is not closed in any longer. This affirmation opens up the possibility that God has some expectation for each one of us. How many of you here this morning have any real hope that your life can be really different? When you came to worship God this morning did you come believing that if you heard him calling and directing your life, you would obey no matter the cost? This is what's involved here. Here is a certain hopefulness about what we shall be. I tell you, this nerves me. This assures me not just to live today but to look towards tomorrow. Herein is our hope according to God's power and God's promise.

Finally, Paul points us to the simple fact that this is no cheap yielding but that it is a very costly thing to be involved with God in this kind of a relationship. Really it appears to be cheaper and easier to follow the old moralisms where the church says you don't

do this or you do that, or where this is said to do this or to do that by simply turning up a page in the book. How very easy the old moralisms are until we attempt to follow them. Paul already knew how difficult the moral life is. And yet he learned how very costly a thing it is to moment by moment check out what it is that God wants you to be and do with your life.

I am finishing now the Gospel of Mark reading it as a morning devotion for myself. I am simply amazed at the way in which Jesus radically responds to God with his life, continually going back to God in prayer and reflection. He seems to be asking, "Is this the way life is to be? Is this the way I am to be? Is this what I am to do with my life?" This is the teaching of Jesus that I would point you to as beyond moralism: a radical obedience beyond all conventional conformity, moment by moment asking God, "Is this where you want me Lord? Is this the direction?" And using the best of your intelligence and information that God has given you, you can hear his word, and find his direction. As a result your life then comes under new management: God's management of your life, which is more than moralism.

Now if you think this is rather abstract and far away let me read one sentence from a line of a young woman who was a part of our fellowship this summer. It was a very difficult summer. She no longer is a part of our community. As she reflected on the summer she wrote, "If this summer was death, death of the original ideal, death of the myths about God and idealism in our society, then I do

think that this new year will be one of resurrection." This is the new life to which God calls you and me in victory. I tell you Brethren, it is beyond moralism. It is the dynamic call of God to you and me through the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus. How will we answer? Will we obey him or will we disobey him. This is the essence of the life which is beyond moralism.

Let us pray.

Remind us O God of the joy and the fulfillment of life in thee that we might quit for all times the legalisms and moralisms of our day and find our lives lifted by the dynamic presence of the living Christ to a radical obedience through which we discover the new channels through which we shall bear the cargo life has laid upon us, and that for thy glory's sake. Amen.

APPENDIX B.

"GOD'S VICTORY AND OURS: ULTIMATELY YOURS"
September 26, 1965

A friend of ours was recently driving his bride-to-be up a long canyon road in the Santa Monica Mountain area. They were going to see the house that he had picked out which would be their home. Being a little bit excited about it, he took the wrong road. They went up and up and up and up. Coming around a corner, they found that the road deadended in a firebreak. They backed down that road inch by inch until they could find a place to turn around, forced to recognize that the end of the road was not their destination.

Now all of us have some ideas about what is the end of life. This is called eschatology. Ask yourselves in these moments together what I consider two very significant questions: First, what is the end for my life? And, second, to what degree does my loyalty to that end of my life influence my decisions from day to day so that when I come to that end, it is also my destination, my ultimate purpose? These are the questions with which we shall struggle in this hour.

Let us pray.

O God, who through the resurrection of Jesus Christ has freed us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of thy love: Grant, we beseech thee, that, as by His death He has recalled us into life, so by His abiding presence He may bring us to the joys eternal; through him who for our sakes died and rose again, and is ever with us in power, the same thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let me phrase the first question in a slightly different way. Is it true that you and I make our own heaven or hell on earth? This

is a question that I have cast back in my lap from time to time by many people. They say, "Well, you know how it is: we do make our own heaven or hell on earth. Don't we?" It's funny but until now, I've never listened closely enough to ask them what they meant. For this you see is a kind of eschatology, a belief about the end of life. This belief says that all there is in life is here and now. There is nothing more. And this is a belief in life which also says that all there is in life I control, I manage, I make. It is an attitude toward life which says if I am good then I will enjoy the consequences of my goodness. If I do evil, then I shall likewise suffer the consequences of that evil. So life is meant to be expressed through my creative handling of my kingdom here and now, for I make my own heaven or hell here.

Certain aspects of life insurance are based on this theology. Now you brethren who sell life insurance must understand that I carry a substantial amount and I believe in it, but at the same time there are some questions which we must ask. And while I'm not knocking your business, I am questioning the attitudes which sometimes go with it. Sometime ago there was a pair of articles which were entitled "The Religion of Life Insurance"; Part I. "The Assurance of Immortality" - Part II, "The Agent, as Priest." Now in the eighteenth century, while you may not remember this, having lived at a slightly different age, the belief in immortality began to decline. With the decline in the belief of immortality, the people's confidence was transferred to a confidence in property as that which would

endure and last after they died. Even though death might have its day, the concept is, you see, that when that time comes, every man will be able to receive a cash benefit. When the trumpet sounds, even though you will not be here to collect it, there will be a cash benefit at your death. You are assured of your immortality.

Back in the little country area where I come from, people are remembered more for how much of an estate they leave than what they were. And when old Jake died everybody knew how much old Jake left to Sam and Mary and Jane and all the rest of the tribe - an assurance of immortality. And so we try to build bigger and bigger barns. This belief in insurance expresses a willingness to postpone satisfaction, personal satisfaction, until after one's mortal existence. This willingness is amazing in a day and an age when we spoof any idea about heaven, any idea about eternal life as a pie in the sky kind of religion. Any religion is condemned when it seems to talk about the home land, the eternal home land, with no reference to now. And yet life insurance seems to encourage me to postpone immediate satisfaction, personal satisfaction, until after this mortal frame has been cast off. Oh, admittedly, there is the satisfaction, and I suppose this is where most of us are, of caring for those who will remain.

Again, how many of us have said, as I have said, "I'm worth more dead than alive!" What a terrible theology! I'm worth more dead than alive. Now I am coming increasingly to the conviction that I'm worth more alive than dead and no amount of insurance will ever really take care of my wife when I'm gone, really, as I would take care of her.

Another interesting insight from this article suggests that as early as 1951 the actuarial count was being made on Manhattan Island. The insurance people began to consider what the implications would be if the atomic bomb were dropped on Manhattan Island. During the day-time when all the commuters were in New York working, if the bomb would fall on Manhattan Island, the actuarial cost would be in excess of \$8,000,000 per square mile. Can you imagine it? (It's cheaper at night when most of the people have gone home. Then it's only \$250,000 per square mile.) But the amazing conclusion to what they came is this: that no matter whether day or night when the bomb would be dropped, they would never be able to pay off! They know something that Pakistan and India and China and the United States and Russia have yet to learn. You can never pay off, especially for the boy who is killed, when he is your son. You mark that down in your book.

There are some other delightfully stimulating parts of the article, particularly the one about the agent as priest. If any of you sell life insurance, brethren, I want you to read this. The article, "The Agent as Priest" indicates that "because of group insurance the agent is increasingly removed from his congregation." I realized that several months ago now, when I tried to get the papers from my group insurance so I could get my baby and wife out of the hospital. It took three long distance calls just to get the papers. Do you know the personal priest was no longer there, just an office girl. Well, what we've been asking here is, "Is it true that we create our own heaven or hell on earth?" This is one of the ways that some of us try to do so.

Now the Apostle Paul in Romans chapter 8 is quite aware and quite specific about the responsibility of choice. What is involved here, it seems to me, is the responsibility of choice. He says, "For those who live according to the flesh, (that is believing I am all that there is, that this is it,) set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death but to set the mind on the things of the Spirit is life and peace." We choose, you see, what kind of ultimate insurance we take out. To say I create my own heaven or hell on earth does not take into consideration, "Why does the good man suffer?" Neither does it take into consideration death as the foreclosure on life as a definite end, without some neat little idea in which we believe that immortality will carry us over. At this point, we are much more influenced by Greek philosophy, than by Christian theology. I suspect that what we are really saying here is when we say "I create my own heaven and hell on earth" is "Well, really you know, who would be stupid enough to create his own hell? Naturally, I'm creating my own heaven. That's what I'm about. I believe in inevitable progress. You know everything is getting bigger and better, onward and upward, Excalibur, that sort of thing, so I really have no time to think about death. Death is what happens to somebody else. Really! And I don't want to think about it for me."

Now, one of the ways that you can judge whether you have ever considered this matter of death is how many of you have ever made a

will. That's the proof of the pudding to a certain degree, superficial as it may be. If you've never made a will, you're running away from the facing of your dying. This is crucial. What will you do with your children? We had to think about our dying two summers ago, when we went away back East. Have you ever sat down and decided who will have your children if you die? That's a knotty one, and blessings on you, if you have Christian friends with whom you would be willing to entrust the lives of your children. Well, if death is the end and destination, all this business about whether I make my heaven or hell on earth is fine. That's all right. But, if God is the end, what then? If God is my ultimate end and destination, what then?

The second thing I want to talk about this morning arose in a conversation in our pulpit talk back group on Monday night. Because these were business men, they examined this passage from Romans in business terms. They saw this business of life invested in the Spirit and life in the flesh in terms of long-range and short-range profit investment. I had never thought of it in those terms, had you? This is to say, the investment in the flesh is really a short-range investment, because it will end one day. Life in the Spirit is a long-term investment for life. Then someone shared about a New York hotel which had lost some ground in its business. As time went on the hotel hired an efficiency expert who went from department to department to find out where they were losing the money. And among the departments that the man went to was the dance band and the dance floor. He said that because this department was losing money, it should be closed and a

juke box substituted for the combo. And so he went throughout the hotel. But what they did not realize was that every year, as an example, a man and his wife came back to New York for their wedding anniversary. They always went dancing and had dinner on that night. They returned to the hotel where they'd gone for years, and the dance floor was closed and the dining room was closed. There was nothing but a snack bar. And so they went to another hotel where these services were present and they took rooms in that other hotel. Well, one day the company woke up that there was nobody sleeping upstairs in the hotel. Because of short-range investment concerns, they had not looked at the long-range program for their business. It was bankrupt. Is it possible that we bankrupt life with just such a short-term attitude? We see only this much. That's all there is to life. We have this and we enjoy it, and it is gone, and we have nothing with God.

Paul Tillich explains what we are saying in these terms. He talks about the fact that our lack of ultimate concern, you can't go much further than that, ultimate concern, our ultimate ground of being in God, that this is what has caused us to lose that central unifying purposeful wholeness for life. Where there is no ultimate concern, life frizzles out at the ends and we drift along aimlessly. We wander fruitlessly and we fail frantically.

I wonder if this is not what happens to us as a nation? Consider historically the people who made this nation great. They came here centered in an ultimate sense of purpose and meaning about life

in God. Most of the first colonists came here for religious freedom. Somewhere along the way, with our lazy tolerance, we have acted as if religion really doesn't matter. Freedom means freedom from religion, freedom from faith. So as a nation, we have lost the central, unifying purpose which gives meaning to everything. This is where we are, at least as this one person views it.

Now it is at this point that the Apostle Paul has something significant to say. He continues in the eighth chapter, "If the Spirit of Him who raised Christ Jesus from the dead raises you also from the dead, then there is this sense that His Spirit dwells in you and gives life to your mortal bodies as well." That in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has answered your existence, my existence, with a new core, a new ultimate center of commitment. And so it is in the J. B. Phillips' paraphrase several verses further on we read these words, "You are on the way to real living. You are on the way to real living - you who are Christian." What does he mean here? Very simply Paul means that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we exchange the resurrected life for death, and so in Jesus Christ we discover not only our end beyond death but our destiny, our destination. And every day we choose death or life as we choose Christ or fail to choose Him. It is this simple. Here is our end, our destination, which is a living experience, is personal, is purposeful, so that the end reflects back and colors and controls what we do from moment to moment, from day to day. To say then, ultimately yours, means that my life is controlled by God.

The other night as we talked, someone used the word "scoundrel." He said that there were a lot of people who were scoundrels, who would never know this sense of ultimate concern. That is to say, they would come to the end of life before they reached their hoped for destination. How tragic! They'd come to the end of life dead before they really reached their destination. And as we talked about scoundrels, somewhere along the way as we shared, we came to the terrible realization that scoundrels weren't somebody out there. We are all scoundrels. We are all scoundrels - sinners - in the eyes of God, people for whom Christ died, revealing the grace of God which saves us in the face of our guilt and our condemnation. So we no longer have to be anxious in the face of our guilt and condemnation when we sign our signature to life, "ultimately yours," in terms of God. For when we say "ultimately yours" to God, we acknowledge that we belong to Him. Not only do we belong to Him, we discover that we belong in existence. We belong in life itself, so that we no longer must be anxious about the meaninglessness and the emptiness of life. In the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are confirmed to be, to be in His creation, as a New Being, as persons with a new wholeness to life.

At this point someone said, "Then you mean that if I ever once made this kind of ultimate commitment to Him, if I ever once got my life so anchored here, then all this fragmentariness which I experience each day would have a meaning, would have a relationship." And that is precisely what we mean when we talk about the resurrection of Jesus Christ as reflecting the ultimate ground of being in God. As a

result life, not just at work, but also in our marriage, our home, everything that we're involved in here, if life really hangs together, it ceases to be meaningless, mechanical and muddled. We are on the way to real living! That's what it is. Very simply, Christ's resurrection confronts you and me as the ultimate concern which can control our lives. What controls your life and colors its moment by moment decisions? When it is controlled by the New Being in Christ, there is joy and vitality and peace that is more than death. And the true commitment is when from this earthly shore we address picture postal cards to God signed "ultimately yours." Herein is the true commitment for us for our lives. Let us pray.

For the possibilities with which thou hast endowed our lives, O God, we praise Thee. We would know and experience something anew of that ultimate relationship with thee which can control our lives, and direct them with an ultimate concern and meaning. Amen.

APPENDIX C.

"GOD'S VICTORY AND OURS: LIFE IS MEETING"
October 10, 1965

Life's greatest disappointments are personal. We are more deeply hurt by people than by things. How often does one listen to a husband or a wife, a parent or a child, an employee or an employer, and hear them express the deep hurt received from someone else or at times done to someone else. In too many of life's relationships the saddest words are, "It might have been different." But if it is true that life's relationships provide our greatest disappointments, it is also profoundly true that our life's relationships provide us with our greatest source of happiness. More so than things, life's relationships contribute to our hope of being people. And so it is that we talk this morning about "Life is Meeting." Now we should be well aware of the fact that Christ's resurrection is profoundly basic to the fact of life as meeting. In Christ's resurrection, God has provided not just the example but also the assurance and the strength and the power and the hope for your life and mine, that we might be free to meet each other in love, receiving life, yes, but also giving life far more than in any biologic sense. So this giving of life and this taking of life is what I want to talk about today, with the basic underlying thesis being that "Life is Meeting."

Let us pray.

O Thou who hast ordered this wondrous world, and who knowest all things in earth and heaven: So fill our hearts with trust in thee that by night and by day, and at all times and all seasons, we may without fear commit all that we have and hope to be to Thine never failing love, for this life and the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I suppose there is not a one of us here that at some time or place has not put tremendous hope in another person and had that hope shattered. We had hoped that something would have been true but it isn't. Hopelessness is the result of a life whose relationships have failed. Hopelessness is the result of a life which has failed to meet another thoroughly, to be a person, and to find another being a person in response. It is what Martin Buber, the late Jewish philosopher theologian called "I-thou" relationships, where the "I" must be truly real as well as the "thou" who enters into relationship with the "I". It is in these kind of relationships that we discover who we are. Herein is our personhood, our identity established, confirmed. Herein do we confirm the identity and the relationship and the personhood of others, by who and what we are in relationship to them.

Perhaps you remember the Emmaus Road experience of the disciples and our Lord. Do you remember that as they walked along with Him, not knowing Him, they tell Him of His own going away from them in death? And they say in reference to Him, "We had hoped that He would be all these things, but it is now the third day since He is gone." The real hopelessness of the disciples was not just that Jesus did not fulfill their expectations. That was true. A greater degree of their hopelessness came from the fact that they had been so close to

Him and yet had failed to really know Him. And so their hearts were broken because they had failed to know Him with Whom they had walked so closely in life. They had superimposed their expectations on Him, on what He would become in Israel. Their expectation blocked them from ever knowing Jesus.

How often do we do this in life? How often do we have such profound expectations for our children without remembering that our children have some ideas of what they will be themselves? And when they are what they are, we're disappointed. For years some parents and children do not really speak to each other in understanding because each has an image of what the other was supposed to have been. And so the conversation is not with what they are.

I often wonder at times whether we don't do this to God. We have an image of who God is and we say that is the way God is. This is how God should perform. This is the way God must be. But our thoughts are not his thoughts and sometimes I wonder if we talk only to our image of what He should be, and as a result never know Him.

Now if for the moment we accept the basic premise that "Life is Meeting," then we must also, it seems to me, accept the reverse of this dictum. We must accept the fact that the failure to meet brings death. In our failure really to love each other, in our failure really to care for each other deeply, we often destroy each other more swiftly than any physical act of violence could do. Love withheld is one of the most destructive things in human life. To fail to give the love that you know another needs often destroys that person.

In our day we talk about "the death of God." We talk about the fact that God is dead. This is a current trend in much philosophy and much writing of our day - "the death of God." But what really is being said is that the images that we have created about God - they're dead. They're fatuous. They offer no hope. We do not say that God is dead. We say only that the images we have set up for God no longer bring responses that give life. For many of you who are seated here today, when your faith caves in on you and you wonder about who God is and why God is, you are responding only to the images you have projected. And the dialogue is fruitless up until the point in which you move beyond the images to talk with God, the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. (This, too, is image, I must confess.)

Within the hopelessness of the death of God, that is to say the loss of eternal hope, man then moves out with frantic haste to make life for himself. The noted Swiss theologian, Emil Brunner, wrote in his book, Eternal Hope after two of his sons were killed tragically. He suggests that for some people in our day, where there is no hope, man as a human creature, frantically goes about his work with a hope that in his work he will discover the meaning of life. And so for many men today, there is a kind of work-fanaticism. How often have you heard it said of a man - "His work was his life"? And this is the work-fanaticism which arises from a lack of hope in any other source of life. And you will have to ask yourself as I must ask myself, what is the meaning of my life? Does this meaning come

from my work or do I bring a meaning for life to my work? Wherein does meaning begin as we face our life and our work?

A further consequence of "the death of God" belief in our day is, that we have gone on to substitute a belief in the inevitable progress of man. This belief reached its peak in the nineteenth century. Only now as we move into the twentieth century, halfway through or more, we have begun to realize the futility, the emptiness of this belief in inevitable progress. An atom bomb, two world wars, the rise of totalitarian states, have done much to weaken this confidence as we face the brutality, the hostility of our times. Indeed, as we face our day, all confidence in the technological society and the organization of man and the state, these things which have been pillars guaranteeing inevitable progress, these very things are now crumbling in nihilistic hopelessness.

The final outcome is reached in the depersonalization of individuals. We are now increasingly numbers, if not anonymous blobs. We become numbers on an I.B.M. card. One of our young men who goes to one of the large universities in this area said that very recently at school registration he spent four and one-half hours in a registration line to get an I.B.M. card that would be his identification in the university bookkeeping system. It took only four and one-half hours to depersonalize him and put him on a card. He now becomes a little hole that goes through a machine. This depersonalization is one of the things that threatens us at our work. For how many of us go to work with a feeling that our work job ought to be one big happy

family and it isn't so? There is not a father image there who reigns with paternal pride over the institution, the business to respond to us as we look for big daddy at the job. One asks, "Are we dependent upon our work for our identity? Where do I learn who I am? Where do I become a person? Does this occur only in my work? Do I carry my personhood to my work?" These are some of the weighty questions that we ask as we face life each day, in all of life's relationships, not alone at work. We had hoped, but . . .

Second, if our failure to relate to each other in life brings death and hopelessness, our success in really meeting in life, really knowing another person, really being known by another person, has the power in itself to bring life, to give life to another, as well as to give life to us. So it was, if you remember the Emmaus Road experience. It says in there that Jesus drew near to the disciples. He went with them. What they are saying is that then as now He meets us in life where we are, not as we think we ought to be. How often do I have people say to me, "Well, Reverend, you know I'm not very religious. I'm not good enough to be a member of the church," and so on. But God meets you right there wherever that is. There are no presuppositions. As they reflected, these disciples reflected on the experience that they had had as they told it to the others. They said "Did not our hearts burn within us as we talked together on the road?" And this burning of their hearts was the recognition that this risen Christ, with whom they now had contact, was the Jesus that they had known before. More than that, God Himself had broken into their

temporal sphere of existence in a new way. Because of this experience, the disciples then, as well as you and I now, find in this experience the basis for our humanity, our new existence as human beings from day to day. For as they ran into Christ in life, and as you run into Him in life, you will discover that it is God's forgiveness that is being ministered to you. It is God's acceptance that is being given to you. Just as you are, wherever you are, He meets you. He loves you just as you are. This forgiveness and this love is basic in lifting us beyond all the separations that keep us apart. All of us stand in need of this forgiveness, whether it is an employee at work who has committed a tremendous error in turning the wrong valve, mixing the oils in such a way that the whole operation is destroyed, or the housewife at home, presenting her burnt offering at mealtime; or, on more profound levels, this need for forgiveness is with us all. We all stand in this need.

Thus it is that Reuel Howe in his book, The Miracle of Dialogue gets at the question in a more simple fashion. Some of you have been reading this little book. Perhaps you'll remember that Howe talks about the purposes of communication, what I'm calling this morning "Life is Meeting." Howe says two things that are particularly significant. He says that this meeting of life brings life's forms back into relationship to the vitality which originally produced them. Think of it - to bring life's forms back into relationship to the vitality which originally produced you! This life bringing restoration is a part of the ministry of meeting. I do not mean "meetings."

Don't misunderstand me. We have enough meetings. But in meeting, there is the possibility that you and I have every day of being a spiritual midwife to some other person as we bring their life into contact with the vitality which originally produced them in God.

Or again, Howe says as a final point that meeting brings people into being out of blobs. (That's this editor's note.) To bring others into being, have you ever thought about this for yourself? As parents, for example, do your children become beings in spite of you or is there something about what you are that brings them not just into the world but into life and into life with God, into community, into communion?

Remember we are saying that "life is meeting." Man becomes man in personal encounter but personal encounter requires address and response between person and person. And if this be true, what kind of a person must I be if I am to meet truly with another. Reuel Howe says these things: that if I am to be this kind of a person, I must first be an authentic person. I think some young people say, "He's for real." To be authentic means to be real and not phony.

Secondly, this person must be an open person. One who is open is a person who is able to listen, to hear, and to bear the risks of hearing. Every one of us here has this ministry. I am very much in favor of the ministry of counselling, the professional counselor, but the professional counselor cannot be every place. He is not God. So we need every ministering Christian as a listener, as a hearer of the heartbeats of joy, yes, to confirm the person caught with the pain of

the heartbeats of sorrow, sadness, and temptation. Yes, to hear them, and to bear the risks of being open. Someone said to me just this past week about another person, "He really can't stand to hear anything that's threatening." As we say, we turn off the knob. We're not always open. Authentic, open, a disciplined person, a person who is disciplined to take responsibility for himself and for others, accepting both the limitations and the opportunities.

And finally, this kind of person which I would hope to be is a responsive person, a person who is related to others in love, responsively. Let me say it all so much more simply in a little story that came out this past week, which many of you may have read already. Mary Martin was entering the stage door in the rehearsal of the musical, "The Sound of Music," and as she went onto the stage she passed by lyricist, Oscar Hammerstein II, who looked particularly haggard and pale. Miss Martin did not know that he was already seriously ill and that she would not see him again. As she passed him, he gave her a slip of paper and said, "I do not know whether this will be used or not in the show but I want you to have it." On this little slip of paper were these words which say it so well.

A bell is not a bell till you ring it.
A song is not a song till you sing it.
And love in your heart wasn't put there to stay
Love isn't love till you give it away.

Life is meeting. This I believe with all my heart is God's way with you and me. What's your way with life? Let us pray.

O Thou who in Thine own infinite way has entered our existence in Jesus Christ to personally love us and to minister to us, we praise Thee for the gift of life. We praise Thee for the hope which Thou has set before us all. We praise Thee for the ministry Thou has put into our lives, bringing life to birth. And we pray that we might not fail Thee or our fellow men. Amen.

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